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The Family and the Making of Women's Rights Activism in Lebanon

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The Family and the Making of Women's Rights Activism in Lebanon

by

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Dedication

To Camille,

For lifting me up high and filling my life with hope and laughter

To Rony and Karla,

For being my greatest teachers on the true meaning of life

To Odette,

People used to tell her to shut me up because I am a girl, but she refused. She wanted me to speak up for my rights and the rights of others. My mother, the ultimate rebel, never shut me up as a child because she wanted me to be a voice for rights

To Mounira,

For illuminating and guiding my journey to knowledge

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This is the story of people who dedicate their lives and hearts to search for the Truth that lies in every tradition and all philosophies. This is a drop in the ocean of attempts to open the eyes of the world to women's struggle for justice; to teach the world about community; and to show how together, people can turn the desert into an oasis. This dissertation is meant to give voice to women who believe in the interconnectedness of all human beings in all their dichotomies and situations, sovereign and communal, compassionate and resolved, daring and caring, just and assertive. This work is for and about lots of people who offered their personal touch to collectively bring this piece of art to life.

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The Family and the Making of Women's Rights Activism in Lebanon

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This research explores how Lebanese women's rights activists use their kinship system to pursue citizenship rights and political recognition. Building on social movements, social capital, and feminist theories, I argue that Lebanese women's rights activists leverage support from their kin groups and adhere to the behavioral norms set by the kinship system in order to gain access, build capacity and advance their movement's goals and strategies.

In investigating the impact of being embedded in—or autonomous from—kinship structure on activism, my research suggests that Lebanese women's rights activists interact with their kin groups at three levels. Firstly, at the level of *becoming an activist*, some women obtain direct support and encouragement from their nuclear and extended family, while others rise through alternative networks such as membership in a political party or a professional union. At the *personal strategies level*, some activists utilize their

family support and kinship networks to establish their activist identities and facilitate their civic engagement, while others use collegial and professional networks. Finally, on the *organizational level*, women's rights organizations pursue women's empowerment in the context of their role in the family, dissolving the divide between women's rights in the sphere of legal equality and women's rights within the family.

Women's relation to kinship is significant in explaining how they form their activist identity and construct their activism, regardless whether they use embedded or autonomous strategies. Activists receive empowerment and support from the family in advancing their goals and consider family members as important forces in shaping their journeys to activism. In the same vein, the kinship system contributes to determining actors' social status at the outset; its networks potentially grant activists access to the public sphere; and its name and ties endows activists with public trust and respect. Lebanese activists expand on the capabilities provided for them by their kin groups to enhance women's status in their public as well as private roles.

Keywords: Kinship, activism, women's movements, social movements, social capital, social networks, Lebanon, Middle East.

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INTRODUCTION

A. Main Objectives

This research aims to explore how Lebanese women's rights activists use their kinship system in their pursuit of citizenship rights and political recognition. To this end, I investigate the impact of being embedded in—or autonomous from—kinship structure on women's rights activism. By kinship structure, I mean a complex set of relations that include immediate family, natal and marital kin, cousins and relatives. My research suggests that women do not passively submit to this structure or separate themselves from it, but they work actively within it to advance their interests. Building on social movement, social capital, and feminist theories, I argue that Lebanese women's rights activists leverage support from their kin groups and adhere to the behavioral norms set by the kinship system in order to gain access to decision-makers and constituents, build capacity for their organizations, and advance the goals of the women's rights movement. This is not a result one would expect from the standard model of modernization, with its emphasis on autonomous agents and its privileging of autonomy-seeking political agendas. In that model, one would expect the crucial advances towards women's rights to be made mostly outside of, or against, the kinship structure.

My approach expands the parameters of knowledge about civic culture and constructs a cross-cultural understanding of family as a source of social capital and networks and a factor in social movements. I examine the interaction of Lebanese women's right activists with their kin groups at three levels. On the first level, I explore how Lebanese

women become civically engaged. I examine the experiences of those who directly obtain support and encouragement from their nuclear and extended family as well as those who rise through alternative networks such as membership in a political party or a professional union. On the second level, I explore personal strategies that activists employ to facilitate their activism and I analyze tactics that incorporate the nuclear family in managing women's absence from the home. Finally, for the third level, organizational strategies, I examine the strategies that activists apply in constructing the Lebanese women's rights movement and whether they utilize their family networks and capital as a resource which they mobilize.

My major findings suggest that kinship empowers women activists. Women's relation to kinship is significant in explaining how they construct their activism whether they use embedded or autonomous strategies. Activists are accompanied by their family throughout the various stages of their lives. In the early years, they benefit from the help of family members in forming their identity; and during adulthood, they receive empowerment and support from the family in advancing their goals. In my fieldwork, I found many activists who testified to the fact that they consider family members as important forces in shaping their journeys to activism. In addition to playing a typical socializing role, activists acknowledge their families' role in fostering their moral and civic principles. Activists recognize their families' roles in raising their consciousness of their social world, and instilling in them principles of tolerance, religiosity and love of Lebanon.

Likewise, the kinship system contributes to determining actors' social status at the outset; its networks potentially grant activists access to the public sphere; and its name and ties endows activists with public trust and respect. Lebanese activists expanded on the capabilities provided for them by their kin groups to enhance women's status in their public as well as private roles. They pursued strategies that do not confront the family, but seek elbow room in the kinship system to create equal rights for women.

B. Kinship in Social Movements

In her groundbreaking work, Charrad (2001) has identified kin groups as key political actors in Middle Eastern societies. She points out that membership in a kin group provides the equivalent to what status, class and power offer in the Weberian model. Membership in a kin group, according to Weber (1946), is among the key determinants of entry into a status group, which in turn determines one's position in the community. Charrad contrasts the kin-based model of social and political life in the history of the Middle East and North Africa with the class-centered model in Western societies. Arguing that kinship should be entered into the analysis of politics, she shows how kin groups historically have occupied a prominent place in shaping not only individuals' membership in the political community, but also the conditions of citizenship and the course of state development (Charrad 2000; 2007c; 2008). Charrad's work focuses on kin groups as an important analytic unit for studying state formation and gender policy. I extend Charrad's framework to study kin groups in social movements, as a positive resource for social movement activists rather than a limit on democracy or the robustness of civil society.

In the Western political tradition, political sociologists and scientists have argued that urbanization and modernity create alternatives to kinship solidarities and networks (Turner 1990). Modernization is identified with the marginalization of the role of the family in the public sphere, and the rise of the voluntary associations that constitute civil society (Putnam et al. 1993). This process is summed up in the notion of autonomy – the primacy of the individual. In actuality, Western politics is much more heterogeneous than this model implies, as can be shown by a glance at the experiences of Western activists who have had to rely on their parochial social networks, including the family and church, to further their political struggles (e.g. inner city Black communities) (Evans and Boyte 1986; Stack 1974).

While autonomy from family networks is assumed in the fields of political sociology and science, fields such as economics, education and even criminal justice link the acquisition of capital to the support that the family provides. Borrowing from these fields and experiences, political sociologists can examine how, not only in Lebanon but elsewhere as well, political positions are still passed on to family members and family names facilitate the acquisition of power and political privileges. Lebanon is a society that is highly differentiated by family status where social capital[1] is gained from family membership and fostered through the networks of the extended family. In Lebanon, the

[1] By social capital, I refer to what Bourdieu Bourdieu, Pierre. 1986. "The Forms of Capital." Pp. 241-58 in *Handbook of theory and research for the sociology of education*, edited by J. G. Richardson. New York: Greenwood Press. defines as "the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to

strength of the family structure is closely connected with the dynamics of kin groups' social status and religion. As a result, that Lebanese women must negotiate the restrictive boundaries and identities imposed by both at the same time as they benefit from it. Kin groups' social status, community origin, and confessional connections influence women's acquisition of social capital both positively and negatively.

Building on the work of Charrad (2001) on kinship and politics, I propose to view kinship as a spectrum in which activists' positions may be classified according to a degree of embeddedness and autonomy. While these analytical dimensions, embeddedness and autonomy, are theoretically opposed to each other, they are non-exclusive in actuality. As this dichotomy emerged from my data, it helped me to understand the significance of kinship in activism.

Embeddedness and autonomy in kinship are analytical dimensions which I use neither in a divisive manner nor to reify activists' positions vis-à-vis kinship. Activists sometimes use strategies that are more embedded and other times more autonomous. Sliding figuratively on an analytical embeddedness-autonomy spectrum, most of the activists were neither totally embeddedness in—nor totally autonomy from—the kinship system. While this dichotomy presents a logical opposition, in practice it is negotiated: Some present themselves as highly autonomous, like the Bahithat, yet use embedded means such as their husbands' political and business connections to fund their projects. Others

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possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationship of mutual acquaintance and recognition."

like Princess Arslan who is highly embedded in her kinship structure, mobilized women to vote and run for office on the basis of seeking autonomy from their traditional leaders, her in-laws the Arslans. Thus, one cannot tell at first glance what dimension dominates in a particular strategy.

To further explain the relationship between activism and kinship, I present a Lebanese approach to understanding kinship. In doing so, I classify membership in a kin group according to positions and relationships with other family members as they exist in Lebanon. This extensive conceptualization of kinship reflects the complexity I found in my field research. Kinship structure in Lebanon, and elsewhere in the Arab world, refers to five categories: the immediate family, natal and marital kin, cousins and extended relatives. These, as I will show through the many testimonies in this study, play a significant role in women's activism. In laying bare the logic of kinship membership as a new typology, I am able to explain not only primary, secondary, and tertiary, but also symbolic kin membership. Finally, I identify the kinship system as a system that encompasses these five categories and the norms and behaviors that regulate relations within and between its structures.

Some activists identify themselves with the kinship system and the roles that are accorded to them as sisters, mothers, daughters, grandmothers, aunts, etc. They treat kinship as a resource, which they put to various uses in the context of various opportunities. Others identify primarily with their independent, non-kinship connected agency in the public sphere. Kinship can work as a resource but also be costly. The

patriarchal family restricts women's individual rights for the sake of protecting the family as a social unit and the individuals as members of the family. Male kin members—including fathers, grandfathers, uncles, brothers, cousins, husbands, sons and in-laws (fathers and brothers)—exercise control over the personal freedom of women especially among the rural and the poor in aspects related to extending or restricting women's access to education for instance. Older women—mothers, grandmothers, aunts, sisters and in-laws (mothers and sisters)—exercise control over young women and, more infrequently, over young men, especially in imposing curfews and dictating dress codes.

C. A Note on Methods

To examine the processes through which political and gender activism is affected by kinship, I construct my study on the basis of interviews, fieldwork observations and content analysis. While in Beirut during the summer of 2006, I conducted the interviews and observations, and I collected Lebanese women's writings on their struggle for women's rights. Using a qualitative methodological approach has allowed me to understand important meanings, interactions and relations relevant to kinship and women's movements. I applied non-probability sampling methods in selecting cases and I have designated my unit of analysis to comprise (1) Lebanese women who were current or previous affiliates of women's rights organizations; (2) Lebanese scholars who have taught and/or written on the subject of women's rights; and (3) Lebanese female politicians who have become public faces for women's empowerment.

During my fieldwork in Lebanon in 2006, I interviewed thirty-two (32) members of fourteen gender and women advocacy groups, mostly in Beirut and its surrounding suburbs where most of the women's advocacy organizations have headquarters (see Appendix One for more details on the organizations). In addition to interviews, I gathered detailed information about respondents' experiences and their organizations. Through participant observation, I gained an understanding of political and social processes which impact women's political participation and public awareness. I conducted both informal observation (interactions in public space) and formal observation (conferences, workshops and meetings). I complemented my interviews and observations with content analysis of 75 books, reports, academic and popular writings of my respondents. This unobtrusive method of collecting and analyzing data was especially helpful after my fieldwork was interrupted by the 2006 war. The war that broke out between Hezbollah and Israel in Lebanon interrupted my research and forced me to evacuate on July 15th, 2006.

D. Case Study Selection: The Story of Lebanon

I selected Lebanon to carry out my research for three reasons. First, the liberal democracy that guarantees freedom of association in Lebanon has been a fertile environment for the flourishing of civil society. Second, Lebanon can be used as a model to learn about Arab women's political participation across their religious affiliation and ethnic memberships, because sixteen ethnosectarian groups are represented in Lebanon. Third, Lebanese women's activism has been historically significant in leading the struggle of Arab women for equal citizenship rights. This historical significance contextualizes the approach that

Lebanese women apply today in framing their movement.

In the Middle East, Lebanon provides a unique research context because of its semi-democratic culture, its broad ethnosectarian composition, and its post-colonial history. Lebanon's form of political representation is unique in the Middle East. Huntington's *Third Wave of Democratization* recognizes Lebanon as the "only Arab country to sustain a form of democracy, albeit of the consociational variety, for a significant period of time…" (1991: 308). What Huntington means by "consociational" is that Lebanese democracy is so constituted that representation is allocated according to a quota system that is determined by the ethnosectarian population of the country; and legal and political rights (in such areas as family law) are also modified according to courts set up to reflect ethnosectarian ideological and legal traditions (Salibi 1988). All sixteen ethnic and religious groups in Lebanon are represented in all legislative, judicial and executive branches of local and national governments.

Lebanon's ethnosectarian percentages and distributions are not representative of other countries in the Middle East—as Christians are represented at higher rates in Lebanon (39% of the population) than in other Arab countries. However, the various religious groups who live in Lebanon are representative of most groups who live in the Middle East (except Jews, who were represented in Lebanon and its parliament until the civil war). The capital Beirut is multicultural; the South falls under the control of the Islamists Shiite Hezbollah; the Mountains are divided between the Druze and the Maronite Catholics; the Beqaa Valley is mostly populated by Shiite and Sunni Muslims; and in the

North, Orthodox Christians live along side Sunni Muslim communities.

Figure 1: Map of Lebanon

Source: http://www.state.gov/cms_images/map_lebanon.jpg

Source: http://bbsnews.net/bbsn_photos/topics/Maps-and-Charts/israel_lebanon_map.jpg

The greater sectarian consensus has led to the development of a multi-level, interlocking set of obstacles against women's rights. According to Joseph (2000), sectarianism in Lebanon has had a contested and nonlinear history. Along with that history, political conflicts—which have infringed on Lebanon's political sovereignty and weakened its political and legal institutions—constitute additional obstacles against the advancement of women's rights in Lebanon.

Five eras in the tumultuous history of Lebanon have left a strong imprint on Lebanese society: Glorious Phoenicia, semi-autonomous Ottoman occupation, French Mandate, the Civil War, and the Second Republic. The Lebanese ancient ancestors, the Phoenicians, built the first city-state of Byblos around 5000 BCE and sailed the Mediterranean Sea

trading and establishing colonies in Tunisia and Spain. This Phoenician heritage lives in the memory of many Lebanese as a reminder of Lebanon's unique leadership and innovative characteristics.

The ethnosectarian structure that exists at present in Lebanon is a result of trajectories that go back to Ottoman times. During the Ottoman era, Lebanese regions were ruled by *muqata'ji* families of emirs and sheikhs, who competed among themselves for power and clout, initiating clan feuds that further aggravated their conflicts. Lebanese today still hold grudges towards the Ottomans for the legacy of the emirate governing system that brought forth today's ethnic and religious conflicts. The Ottomans introduced the *Millet* system to Lebanon, which was allegedly an improvement over the Arab's *Dhimma* system because it allowed the Christians and the Jews and all the non-Sunni communities a certain autonomous legal and administrative status (including legislative and judicial jurisdiction over family law, and providing travel documents, good behavior affidavit to conduct business, etc.).

The French Mandate in Lebanon (1920-1943) preserved the *Millet* system and furthered the balance of power between Christians and Muslims by officially declaring the equal status of 17 ethnosectarian groups *as confessions* under the infamous law known as LR 60 in 1936 (Joseph 2000). This law recognized eleven Christian sects including: Maronites, Antioch Orthodox, Greek Catholics, Armenian Gregorian Orthodox, Armenian Catholics, Syrian Orthodox, Syrian Catholics, Assyrian Chaldeans, Nestorian, Roman Catholics, and Protestants; five Muslim sects: Sunnis, Shiite Alawites, Shiite

Jaafari, Ismaelites, and Druze; and Jews (with its three synagogues in Aleppo, Damascus and Beirut). Only recently, in 1996, did the Coptic Orthodox denomination replace the disappearing Jewish Lebanese community.

The French Mandate reinforced the confessional system by giving the confessions jurisdiction over the various aspects of family law. Each one of these denominations established its own confessional court with its own specific laws to exercise their exclusive jurisdiction over the following matters: Engagement and dowry; marriage (lawfulness, rights and obligations, annulment, separation, dissolution); requirements for legal and illegal filiations and adoption; parental authority over, and guardianship of, children and other minors; managing divorce, separation, annulment as well as associated alimony; and imposing and estimating child support. The French also introduced a significant number of laws, which currently govern many administrative aspects of the Lebanese society. These laws were equally restrictive of women's rights. According to my respondents for instance, the French Mandate forbade Lebanese women from opening personal bank accounts after they had been allowed to do so under the Ottoman rules, on the premise that French women did not have such rights.

The thirty years in which the First Republic existed were marked by competition between the various ruling families and continuous interference by foreign powers especially France and Britain. The Civil War era started in 1975 after Palestinian refugee population reached 300,000 and established its quasi government within the Lebanese

State (Salibi 1988).[2] Tension grew between the Palestinians and the Christians, inviting the intervention of the Syrian army on behalf of the Christians. In 1978, Israel invaded Lebanon in response to Palestinians' attacks within Israel; and took over Beirut in 1982. As some Lebanese leaders allied themselves with the Israelis, the war proliferated into many fronts and included foreign powers such as France, the United States, Saudi Arabia and Iran. Many view the civil-war era as the darkest mark on Lebanon's long history of coexistence and civility. The civil war claimed 100,000 lives, left another 100,000 disabled, and as importantly created an enormous diaspora: "Up to one-fifth of the pre-war resident population, or about 900,000 people, were displaced from their homes, of whom perhaps a quarter of a million emigrated permanently" (GlobalSecurity.org 2000). Cities became segregated into religious pockets and families were separated. Trust and hope were lost and powerful militia groups like Amal and Hezbollah emerged as revolutionary clusters of the poor Shiite to once again threaten the security and stability of the country.

The post-civil war era, also known as the Second Republic, witnessed the return of confessional democracy, but with new partners, Amal and Hezbollah. The *Taef Accord*, which was engineered in the city of Taef in Saudi Arabia in 1989, reshuffled the power cards between Christians and Muslims giving equal representation to both religions at

[2] Initially the Palestinian leadership, Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) was stationed in Amman, Jordan. However, in 1970 King Hussein of Jordan crushed the PLO's increasing power in the Kingdom killing tens of thousands Palestinians, an event known in history as Black September. Upon this brotherly violence, the PLO moved its headquarter to Beirut. Upon the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, the PLO leadership moved to Tunis, where it remained until the Oslo Accords in 1994 and the establishment of the Palestinian Authority as a semi-autonomous state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

every governing level.[3] The Taef Accord specifically declares the President to be a Maronite Christian, the Prime Minister a Sunni Muslim, the Parliament Speaker a Shiite. All militia were integrated within the unified Lebanese army with the exception of Hezbollah, which continues to fight Israel beyond the latter's withdrawal from southern Lebanon in 1997; such irregular attacks instigated the Israeli invasion again in 2006, when Hezbollah kidnapped two Israeli soldiers.[4] According to the *Taef Accord*, the Syrian army was to remain in Lebanon temporarily to shepherd the reinstitutionalization of the Lebanese state. Syria stayed beyond its welcomed years and was only ushered out of Lebanon in 2005 by the Cedar Revolution of March 14th 2005, as one million peaceful Lebanese demonstrators protested in the largest nonviolent demonstration in Lebanese history (MacFarquhar 2005).

Political instability has pushed women's issues to the backburner and given priority to national causes. The political instability caused by war with Israel, the continuous frictions by internal powers with external loyalties to Syria, Iran or the United states, and the decentralization of the consensual democratic system are closely intertwined with the power struggle between the confessions and the autonomy of the state. Frictions and decentralization have produced an imbalance of power between the confessions and the state. The central government is unable to assert its power without reaching consensus

[3] The Text reads: "Until the Chamber of Deputies passes an election law free of sectarian restriction, the parliamentary seats shall be divided according to the following bases: a. Equally between Christians and Muslims. b. Proportionately between the denominations of each sect. c. Proportionately between the districts.

[4]According to a World Bank Economic and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA), the war 2006 caused $2.4 billion in direct damage to the Lebanese infrastructure and up to $800 million in indirect losses. http://www.rebuildlebanon.gov.lb/english/f/NewsArticle.asp?CNewsID=919.

among the confessions and their secular leaders. The official culture of Lebanon, taught in schools and propagated in the media, depicts Lebanon as "a nation composed of multiple natural communities organized on the basis of religious sects. In this view of the civic myth, the religious sects existed before the Lebanese state and were presumed to have sustained a continuity of sectarian communal culture and cohesion" (Joseph 2000: 108). Based on the centrality of the sectarian pluralism myth, "the state has delegated family law (Personal Status Laws), to religious courts rather than legislating a unified civil law" (Joseph 2000: 108).

As in many Middle Eastern and Islamic countries, women in Lebanon are subject to restrictive family legal codes, which institutionalize their subordination to religious establishments. Lebanese women's socioeconomic status is also representative of women's conditions in the Arab world as a whole. The World Bank classifies Lebanon as an upper-middle income country. In 2003, its GNP per capita was $4,320, which is close to the $4,601 average income per capita in other Arab states.[5] In 2000, Lebanese women constituted 29% of the labor force. Other Arab countries' female participation in the labor force was 28%. Overall, female pupils make up 48% of all pupils in primary schools and 53% in secondary schools in Lebanon—compared to 46% and 47% in other Arab countries (Genderstats).

[5] GNP ranges for other Arab states are as follow: Kuwait, $17,970; Bahrain, $12,410; Saudi Arabia, $9,170; Oman, $7,890; Libya, $4,400; Tunisia, $2,240; Jordan, $1,910; Egypt, $1,390; Morocco, $1,310; Syria and West Bank, $1,120; Yemen, $510 and Sudan $460 (Genderstats).

E. The Development of Lebanese Women's Activism

Before we consider the development of the women's activism in Lebanon, it is useful to define how my respondents viewed their activism. I find Al-Ali's anthropological study of Egyptian activists, helpful in explaining how Lebanese women frame their activist role in similar manners:

> The very term 'activism' glosses over a variety of involvements and activities, which, if considered in isolation, are not all forms of 'political activism': charity and welfare, research, advocacy, consciousness-raising, lobbying and development. What justifies the label 'women's activism' for a broad range of engagements is the fluid nature of this field in which certain activities, not strictly defined as activism, such as research, for example, might develop into more political engagements, such as advocacy or lobbying. Moreover, groups and individuals, at any given point of time, might develop into more political engagements, some not strictly 'activist' and others more so (Al-Ali 2000: 6).

Ali's description of activism reflects the way that the Lebanese activists whom I interviewed identified themselves. Lebanese activists take on diverse roles such as *Munadela, Nashita*, or *Musharika* (fighter/struggler, activist, or participant) as dynamic strategies –rather than as permanent labels, e.g. the label "feminist," which seems to dictate a more predictable set of relations that are not compatible with the contested spheres in which women advocate for rights in Lebanon.

An earnest, politically conscious advocacy for women's rights emerged in the Middle East during the decolonization and nationalism period of the early 1900s. Early women

rights advocates were influenced by a number of events: notably, the emancipation of Turkish women by Mustafa Kemal Ataturk (which, it should be noted, came twenty years before France gave women the right to vote), and the movement started by the Egyptian, Huda Shaarawi, who shed her veil and led a movement affecting many other women in 1923 (which was, incidentally, the decade in which woman's suffrage made significant strides in the West as well). Lebanese Women's activism has its roots in journalism, educational programs and charity organizations. In 1910 a significant number of teachers, journalists, social workers, writers and poets were women. Literary journalism was a great outlet for women to engage in the public sphere while remaining physically secluded in the private sphere. Twenty-one monthly and fortnightly women's magazines were published by Lebanese women between 1892 and 1920 in Cairo, Alexandria, and Beirut (al-Qaderri 2001).

The pioneers of the Lebanese women's movement—Labiba Tabet, Adèle Nakhou, Ibtihaj Kaddoura, Rose Shihaa, Evelyn Boustros, Laure Tabet, Najla Saab and Emily Fares Ibrahim—considered women's integration in the society through education and work as essential for their participation as equal citizens in building a strong nation-state. They were influenced by the message and efforts of American and French missionaries to educate girls. The famous intellectual Salma Sayegh declared during a speech on "the formation of women's spirit" in Tripoli Lebanon in 1924 (al-Qaderri 2001: 71): "The West is swift and the East is slow, the former is radical and the later is conservative. That's why the women's movement did not flourish in our homelands like it did in the

West. By implanting our first schools, that movement implanted its essence in the hearts of our girls who looked up to their teachers as role model to follow."

Charitable organizations, *al jameyat al khayrieh* (الجمعيات الخيرية), emerged in Lebanon in the late 1800s and have sustained their presence and their historical leadership roles till today. Led mostly by elite women, these organizations concentrated on increasing women's participation in public life through education and vocational training (Hijab 1988: 144). By the early nineteenth century, women were extensively involved in charitable organizations as an opportunity to participate in the public life without violating social norms and expectations. Founded in 1947, the Christian Women Solidarity Association (CWSA) was composed of women representatives from twenty Christian organizations throughout Lebanon, who were members of the elites and the *haute bourgeoisie.* The main goals of the association were to help the poor and the needy, to reform prison conditions, and to improve women's living standards.

The shift to political activism accompanied the joining of the Lebanese Women Union, which was founded in 1920 to bring together Arab nationalists and leftists, with CWSA to form the Lebanese Council of Women in 1952. The Council, which remains today as the most representative umbrella group of women's organizations, holds a consultative status in the Lebanese Parliament. Political Advocacy began with the Council's fierce fight to obtain suffrage rights for women. They succeeded in gaining voting rights for all Lebanese women by a decree that was enacted on February 18, 1953. Then the Council launched subsequent campaigns to reform the bias against women in inheritance laws in

1959, eliminating a law that forced women to renounce their Lebanese citizenship upon marrying foreign men in 1960, and eliminating bureaucratic restrictions on women's right to travel without the written consent of their husbands in 1974 (Chkeir 2002).

By the end of the twentieth century, advocacy women's organizations, *al jameyat al matlabiyeh* (الجمعيات المطلبية), became the second type of women groups, appearing throughout the Middle East as well as in Lebanon. Guided by the writings of the renowned Lebanese lawyer and women's rights activist, Laure Moghaizel (1985) Lebanese activists whom I interviewed classify women's rights in the following five areas of the law: Political rights, legal competency, economic and social rights, punitive laws, and the Personal Status law. The emergence of Middle Eastern advocacy groups as significant players was due to a number of endogenous and exogenous factors: Prior to the civil war, women sections were created among several political parties to encompass highly political women. These sections separated from their party of birth and gained autonomy over the years. After the civil war, augmented global attention to, and funding for, gender related-issues, on the part of international organizations, brought the state in partnership with charitable women's organizations to provide social welfare services and design the future of gender relations in the country, specifically the adoption of the United Nations' Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discriminations against Women (CEDAW) and the United Nations' Fourth Conference on Women in Beijing on

September 4-15, 1995.[6] Activists in multiple advocacy groups used this political opportunity to reach out to women and increase their political awareness by forming organizations scaled to both the local and national level and by maneuvering through state, religious apparatus and familial structures.

One may reasonably ask what Lebanese activists have been able to achieve? This issue is beyond the scope of the study which is more concerned with how women engage in activism. In brief, however, it is fair to say that the question of social security has been met with great success. Women's rights organizations were instrumental in changing the social security law in 1999 to grant working women an entitlement to social security benefits.

F. Changes in Political Opportunity Structure

The time period examined in this research focuses on the era from 1990 to 2006. This era is a significant period because of the changes that occurred in the topography of the political scene in the Middle East and in the world. Many of the opportunities that opened the space for women in the 1990s were the results of two political national and international changes. Nationally, the fifteen-year civil war ended with the *Taef Peace Accord.* The accord brought new political cleavages between the various ethnosectarian groups and new implications for women. Women's organizations were given political space and entrusted with providing social welfare services. Activists used this political

[6] The official name of the Conference was "The Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace," in which 189 governments were represented and more than 5,000 delegates came from 2,100 non-governmental organizations.

opportunity to increase women's attainments in education, work and political rights. On the international front, Lebanon was affected by the declarations and pledges that came out of the Beijing Conference for women and The UN sponsored Convention and ending all forms of discrimination against women (CEDAW). The Beijing Conference compelled the Lebanese state to institutionalize its commitment in programs and agencies that focus on advancing women's rights and participation in the public sphere.

Both McAdam et al (1996) and Tarrow (1998) propose that changes in the political structure, political constraints, or "informal power relations" create opportunities for resource-poor actors to engage in contentious politics. The post-civil war era in Lebanon witnessed a re-shifting of political alliances from the former sanctioned confessional cleavages (between Sunnis and Shiites and Muslims and Christians) to the new pro-Iran and pro-US camps. This new political situation divided every confession and caused some to support the allegedly pro-western women's groups and others to oppose them.

The war created political opportunity for women. During the period of the breakdown of several traditional Lebanese organizations, women's organizations, which were traditionally linked to charity organizations, not only survived but garnered popular respect from their dual roles of relieving victims of war and advocating for peace. In the aftermath of the war, women continued to gain prominence in leadership roles in charitable ethnosectarian organizations that assisted the needy and educated rural and Dahhiya women.

National women's organizations, which had emerged in the second Lebanese wave of women's activism, among leftist middle class women before the war, reinvented themselves after the war through projects targeting the economic development and education of Lebanese women. They also used the political space and opportunity they had acquired for having provided social welfare services during the war to increase women's awareness of their social and political rights. Neda Majed, an activist in the Lebanese Women Democratic Gathering, discusses the transformations that the Gathering experienced since the war. "During the war, the Democratic Gathering helped people and dispersed supplies to the victims of the war. When the war was over, we started… to crystallize around the idea of a women's movement. It was not enough for us to give assistance during the war; we wanted to modernize the conception of the Gathering to create the feminist movement. At first, we used the phrase 'the women's democratic movement'; then we started saying the word 'feminist.'"

Intellectuals, who were generally dependent on the continued functioning of educational institutions, the print media, and collegial networks, were isolated by the collapse of these structures during the war. A good example of the new postwar life experienced by the Lebanese women's movement was the founding of Bahithat, the Lebanese association of Women Researchers, formed to bring together intellectual refugees who had spent fifteen years of their lives escaping the bombing and moving from town to town and house to house. Professor Azza Charara Beydoun, co-founder of the Lebanese Women Researchers (Bahithat), thinks of the Bahithat as a self-help support group: "we were very

lonely as researchers, as intellectuals, so to support ourselves or self improvement [we formed the Bahithat] on strictly altruistic lines."

Outside Lebanon, the United Nations' Conference on women in Beijing produced a raft of programs and a vocabulary that in turn brought about the founding of a plethora of organizations. Beijing created an opportunity for mobilization by adding an international dimension to the political structures in which women's rights are contested. They represented the full spectrum of gender issues: from those working to end gender-based legal and cultural discrimination and the lack of representation of women in the government, to those demanding a bigger share for women in the economic sector, to those devoted to ending the unacceptable rate of women's illiteracy. According to Beydoun, who has been a witness for more than a decade to these events, a lot has happened since the UN Conference on Women in Beijing:

> After Beijing, the subject of women dominated public discussions. It became impossible to read the daily paper without reading something about women's activism. The women domain stopped being represented by charitable organization. Even for those, their goals became politicized. Women's activism used to be just social, but it moved to the political realm. And politics itself changed. Politicians became obliged to use social models that include women, family and kin groups. This is due to globalization and exchange with the outside world.

New organizations, new alliances and new discourses emerged after Beijing. By emphasizing a gender equality discourse, CEDAW and the UN Beijing conference set the tone in the nineties. They allowed women in the non-western world to purposively and publically articulate their political demands and call to action outside a framework previously set solely by activists in Western countries (Koopmans 2005).

G. Organization of Dissertation

This dissertation is organized in six chapters. The first chapter discusses relevant literature in each of the fields of feminist studies, political sociology and Middle Eastern gender studies. The second chapter offers a discussion of the methodology used to conduct this study in a society that is highly affected by close networks. In the third chapter, I discuss how kin groups influence women's rights within both nuclear and extended family structures. Chapters four, five and six offer a discussion of women's activism in Lebanon. In chapter four, I analyze the impact of being embedded in, or autonomous from kin groups on women's decisions to engage in activism. In chapter five, I discuss the personal strategies that activists apply in utilizing their nuclear family support and extended kinship networks on facilitating their participation in the movement's activities. Finally, in the sixth chapter, I examine these strategies as they are enacted on the organizational level.

The first chapter on theory contributes to three bodies of literature in the fields of Social movements, social capital and feminism. Using the concepts of reflexivity, culture, kinship, and embedded-autonomy, I engage these bodies of literature and identify their

respective gaps when it comes to analyzing women's activism in Lebanon. I examine how social movement theorists have normatively supposed that social capital has to be cultivated from autonomous relationships that are fostered only in the context of civil society in democratic settings (e.g. Tilly 1999). I also highlight the conflict they see between pursuing radical democratic goals and being embedded in parochial social networks as activists develop detached and cosmopolitan protest identities. I challenge the argument of social capital theorists that the development of trust networks outside family ties is necessary for the advancement of civil society, and that modern citizenship requires the erosion of traditional structures like kinship. In the same vein, I attempt to contribute to the dialogue between feminist theory and family scholarship, casting a light on a significant but understudied aspect of women's agency within kinship structure. Some Western feminist studies assume the inability of feminist movements to advance except in so far as they advocate for the goal of autonomy from traditional structures such as the family. While recognizing the salience of cultural differences, this dissertation converges with a number of studies by liberal feminists and the literature on women's activism on the significance of the family in women's lives.

The Methods chapter is a description of the approach I followed in applying qualitative methodological strategies while doing field research in Lebanon in 2006. Reflexivity and feminist principles guide my methodological approach and connect it to my theoretical perspective. The contribution of this chapter reaches beyond the practical knowledge associated with ethnographic work by putting the kinship network to practical methodological application. I show how I maneuvered my own kinship networks and

used my family name and connections to get access to my respondents and also gain their trust. This chapter provides a vivid example of survival while doing research in a war zone. As my research was interrupted by the 2006 Israeli invasion of Lebanon, this chapter provides insight about the complexity of assessing danger, evaluating rescue options, and making the evacuation decision.

In Chapter three on family structure, I map out a typology of Lebanese kinship relations, showing the conditions under which social capital is acquired in Lebanon through family membership. In developing a definition of kinship from a Middle Eastern perspective, I classify membership in a kin group according to five positions and relationships in nuclear and extended families (nuclear, natal, marital, extended and symbolic). I also examine how social capital from kinship is constructed within the context of community origin (in tribal, rural, urban and poor suburb communities), social class (among elites, intellectuals, middle and working class) and confessionalism. I offer an analysis of the responsibilities which women fulfill towards their kin groups in the form of care-giving and the rights which kinship offers in exchange in the form education and welfare.

The fourth chapter examines the agency/structure problem in terms of the woman's rights motivation set. I review structural and personal reasons that have helped women become activists. This chapter explores how some arrangements in the nuclear family and the extended kinship structure encourage women's activism while others do not. I examine closely the support that women received from their fathers, mothers, and husbands in their civic engagement and the opportunities offered to them through their kinship

networks and social status.

The fifth and sixth chapters on strategies address how women join, organize and frame their movement. The Lebanese women's rights movement uses autonomous and embedded strategies to modify and partially dismantle the gender-defined division between the public and private sphere. In chapter five, I show how some Lebanese women's rights activists use unobtrusive personal strategies. While adhering to the behavioral norms set by the kinship system, some activists use kinship networks to gain access and build their personal capacities and others worked outside them. Chapter Six highlights embedded and autonomous approaches to organizational resource mobilization strategies and framing processes.

CHAPTER ONE: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND BACKGROUND

A. Introduction

This study aims to contribute to the sociological literature of three distinct but overlapping theoretical fields: Social movements, social capital and feminism. The chapter identifies assumptions in the literature that animate such claims as the following comparison, given in a New York Times article entitled "It Takes a Family (to Break a Glass Ceiling)" to describe Hillary Clinton's ascension to power in America: "Like it or not, the road to female advancement often begins at the altar. History books are thick with examples of women who broke political barriers because their family connections afforded them the opportunity. If you've ever wondered why India, Indonesia, Myanmar, Pakistan and the Philippines seem readier to elect women than does the United States, here's your answer: Societies that value a candidate's family affiliation, and therefore have a history of nepotistic succession, are often open to female leadership so long as it bears the right brand. Benazir Bhutto, Indira Gandhi and Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, among many others, slashed through gender barriers on the strength of their family names" (Howley 2008).

Howley raises a valuable point showing that family's reputation and networks have helped women's ascension to power in various degrees. The question of whether women activists could consolidate their feminist identity and activism with their membership in the family becomes more than academic for feminists in Pakistan, India, Burma or – in

the country I studied – Lebanon. A gap in the scholarly literature on social movements and feminism exists in regards to studying the family and political activism. Studies that evaluate how feminism copes with, or is advanced or aided by kinship, especially extended family include studies such as (Boswell and McArthur 2006; Dabel 2008; Hill Collins 2008; Vargas 2008). The missing link lies in incorporating the experiences of non-western women in the analysis of social movements, social capital and feminist movements.

In the following, I examine instances in which the kinship system is perceived as a source of social capital or a web of social networks in the social and women's movements literature. While a comparison between studies conducted in Western and non-Western societies might present different political environments and social contexts, the contrast offers an illuminating angle to explore the extent and power of family relations in both worlds. In the same vein, discussing social capital is an important part of understanding kinship's negative as well as positive contributions to participation in the public life.

B. Conceptualizing Kinship

In his theory of status groups, Max Weber identifies two types of charisma, *Gentilcharisma* and *Amstcharisma.* While the second term arguably refers to "institutional" charisma which is obtained from holding a certain post (*Amst*) or position, the first type of charisma refers to kinship (Shils 1965) and family (Bendix 1960). Parsons (1960: 752) explains that Weber's *Gentilcharisma* refers to *lineage* as "the extended kinship unit with emphasis on its continuity through an indefinite number of

generations." Weber recognizes that kinship, in its primordial properties, passes this *Gentilcharisma* unto its members in a territorial community (Shils 1965). Kinship not only passes charisma to its members, it also defines their worth in the community. For Weber, kinship is among the key determinants of entry into a status group—which in turn determines one's social honor in the community. According to Weber (1946), status groups make up the social order, classes constitute the economic order, and parties represent the legal/political order. Each of these orders affects and is affected by the other.

In building the discourse of modern political society, political sociologists and scientists have argued that the road to urbanization, modernity and nationalism is partially achieved by creating alternatives to such traditional solidarities as kinship solidarities, using a model of progress with deep roots in the enlightenment. In this model, the prerequisite for complex societies is the institutionalized disempowering of kinship ties. For instance, Bodin (1606) sees the family, the civil associations, the corporations and fraternities as logical and historical antecedents to the state. Rousseau (1987) distinguishes between public and private economies, giving the first to the government and the second to the family; and characterizing the first as having national rights and obligations whereas the latter as exercising only administrative power over individuals. While Locke recognizes a familial role in the liberal polity, to him this role is limited to providing children with civic education within the traditional family boundaries (Pfeffer 2001). Likewise, Hobbes posits that the family's sole purpose is that of procreation (Nisbet 1962: 136).

In this tradition, the marginalization of the role of the family in the public sphere goes hand in hand with modernization. In fact this tradition continues with contemporary theoretical approaches, Turner (1990: 194) suggests “that the historical development of citizenship requires certain universalistic notions of the subject, the erosion of particularistic kinship systems in favor of an urban environment which can probably only flourish in the context, initially, of the autonomous city.” However, even in western societies and their modern institutions, Nisbet claims that kinship serves as the archetype of communal aspirations (See also Hunt 1992): “There is a kind of historical awareness implicit in this focusing upon the family, for the overwhelming majority of communal or sacred areas of society reflect the transfer, historically, of kinship symbols and nomenclature to non-kinship spheres (Nisbet 1962: 287notes).

The high salience given to the nuclear family in the United States and Western Europe has dominated the definition of the kinship system among sociologists. Kinship became a feature of primordial and tribal societies suitable to be studied by Anthropologists. Robert Nisbet lamented as early as 1962 the seriousness of the problem with Western societies’ attitudes on the family: “Nowhere is the concern with the problem of community in Western society more intense than with respect to the family. The contemporary family, as countless books, articles, college courses, and martial clinics make plain, has become an obsessive problem. The family inspires a curious dualism of thought. We tend to regard it uneasily as a final manifestation of tribal society, somehow inappropriate to a democratic, industrial age, but, at the same time, we have become ever more aware of its possibilities as an instrument of social reconstruction” (1962: 58).

Cultural anthropologists have proven to be less under the sway of these assumptions than sociologists, as they have gone about defining and classifying kinship ties and structures. The plethora of research on kinship in anthropology has produced a variety of definitions of kinship as a system of relations and biological connections, a social organization and cultural norms. Some define kinship as a system of social relationships that are expressed in a biological idiom (Tonkinson 1991); others see it as a cultural system of symbols (Schneider 1980); or a relationship by blood (consanguinity) or marriage (affinity) between persons; but Stone argues that "Kinship involves much more, however, than relations through descent and marriage, social structure, and rights and obligations between kin. Indeed, kinship is also an ideology of human relationships; it involves cultural ideas about how humans are created and the nature and meaning of their biological and moral connections with others" (Stone 2000: 6). Nonetheless, agreement generally exists that strong kinship ties remain a feature of societies who still lag behind modernity. Anthropologists contend that in preindustrial, primitive, and peasant societies, individuals are bound to both the family of orientation – the family of parents and relatives - and to the family of procreation – the family created by marriage (Stone 1997); and "a large number of different kinds of institutions are organized and built as parts of the kinship system itself" (Schneider 1980: vii).

The aim of this study is not to analyze the relevance of kinship to western societies, nor to measure the costs and benefits of ignoring the public role of the family in the Western social and political theories. In echoing Charrad's claim (2006b: 354) that "Concepts of

modernity must be reframed constantly, and everywhere, to account for cultural specificity in different countries." this study aims to show that the family's public role has been underconceptualized in the Western frame of reference, which has operated with a notion of modernity that marks the kinship's role as a kind of primitive legacy or a form of tribalism. My attempt is to provide a sociological analysis of non-Western examples of political agency that does not make assumptions about value and function of family based on the Western experience. This includes bracketing distorting assumptions and vocabulary about societies in which the family's public role is still significant.

Approaching status from a non-western perspective, Charrad (2001; 2006a) argues that membership in a kin group provides the equivalent to what status, class and power offer in the Weberian model; in that such membership determines the individual's social status, economic class and access to power. She argues that, "Historically, the institution of the family has been at the center of the social fabric of Tunisian society, as it has been on most of the African continent and in the Arab world" (Charrad 2006a: 44). In her 2001 comparative study of Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco, in *States and Women's Rights: The Making of Postcolonial Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco,* Charrad conceptualizes the centrality of kinship primarily in relation to politics. She defines a kin group (also referred to as tribe in historical context) as "primarily a political entity, bound by shared conceptions of patrilineal kinship serving as a basis for solidarity, and oriented toward the collective defense of itself as a group" (2001: 9). She suggests that "Kin groupings historically acted as corporate structures striving for autonomy from the centers of political power" (2001: 24). She further indicates that "Coalitions based on tribal kin

groupings played a role in nationalism and then in the independent nation-state, and they did so by entering the modern politics of the mid-twentieth century" (Charrad 2001: 26-7). Throughout her analysis, Charrad underscores the primacy of kinship as a key variable in differentiating the process of state formation and policy outcomes in the Maghribi countries (2001: xii). She develops the theory that the more autonomous the postcolonial state was from kin groupings at the end of colonial rule in the Maghreb, the more likely it was to adopt reformist policies on Islamic law and to expand women's rights (2001: 2). In the next section, I turn to the literature on parochial and family networks vis-à-vis the larger framework of social movements. I seek to know if the socio-political environment dictates the level of embeddedness in, or autonomy from kinship networks.

C. Social Networks and Movements

In this section, I first review the approaches that have been used to define social networks in the social movement literature. Second, I examine the impact of embedded and detached social networks on identity construction and individual participation in collective action. And third, I investigate the consensus account of the relationship between social networks and culture, taking up the problem of whether kinship networks should even be considered relevant or useful.

Social movement scholars agree that networks influence individuals' participation in collective action (Gould 1995; Heckathorn 1993; Kim and Bearman 1997; Marwell and Oliver 1993; McAdam and Paulsen 1993). In the literature I discuss below we see that

networks are referred to as collectives of enabling structures; relations between actors; and, constructed meanings. As structures, networks have topographical dimensions such as a core, boundaries, depth, distance, and positionality. These dimensions situate individuals who are trying to affect others and to carry on appropriate social actions, presenting both resources and obstacles.

Knoke and Kuklinski (1982: 12) define networks as "a set of actors or, in the language of graph theory, nodes, connected by a specific type of relation." These nodes, which represent relationships, typically build a sense of trust, reciprocity, solidarity, and cooperation through involvement in local communities and voluntary associations, as evident in Bellah's (1985) *Habits of the Heart.* Similarly, Doug McAdam's review (2003: 285) of structural analysis theory and its critics, considers three "structural facts associated with the origins of contention:" Recruits tend to know others who are involved, social movements develop mostly within established social settings, and emerging movements tend to spread out along established lines of interaction; all of which define social action within networks.

White (1992: 67), taking a communications-centered approach, sees social networks as "a network of meanings." Passy (2003: 23) refines this approach by asserting that network ties "are imbued with stories." She posits that "The social networks in which actors interact convey meanings (e.g. symbols, rituals, narratives) that build and solidify identities and shape the actors' cognitive frames, thereby enabling them to interpret social reality and to define a set of actions that involve them in this perceived reality" (Passy

2003: 23-4). Symbols and rituals that dignify the family also define individuals' sense of their identity and cognitive frames. The theme that emerges from these operational definitions is that individuals take action within a frame of structures, encoding and encoded by meanings or relations that are socially embedded.

Regardless of the nature of these networks, scholars concur that there is a communicative aspect to networks. Networks are symbolic and relational, yet most of the times they are dynamic and changing. Scholars who have drawn these networks have found that a few structural features are important once these networks are given physical characteristics. Diani's (2002) research on networks, which uses a typology based on the distinction between two important dimensions of networks, one of which is defined by the degree of centralization, and the other of which opposes reticulate and segmented networks, gives us reasons to take these parameters of the network structure as important to the social movement's relationship to power. According to Diani (2002), as structures, networks contain cores and boundaries and individuals occupy differential positions along various cores and boundaries of certain networks. Individuals who may be traced to dense overlaps of networks have stronger connectivity than others with limited connectivity, or what Durkheim has coined as social integration. Connection produces the ability to influence and interact with more people as demonstrated by social movements theorists like Klandermans (1997), Morris (1984), and Snow Zurcher, and Elkand-Olson (1980).

Diani also introduces the concept of *betweenness*, which measure whether the actor is "located in an intermediate position on the paths connecting other actors" or whether two

actors are directly connected (Diani 2002: 188). This betweenness represents the overlap of various networks. Whether an individual occupies the core of one network but the falls on the boundaries of other networks, is less important than the actor's ability to utilize these networks to build their relational structures (Putnam 1993: 88). In Putnam's opinion, relational structure may be horizontal, and translate into reciprocity and cooperation; or vertical and dictate authority and dependency. Take the family as an explanatory illustration of how actors benefit from networks' communicative aspects according to their position in the core, within boundaries or in-between networks (per Diani). A woman may occupy the core of her nuclear family that consists of her husband, children and herself. She might be on the boundaries of her parents' network and her in-laws' network. Her position in her parents' network might be more central than in hers with her in-laws. She is also between the two networks of parents and in-laws, noting that both networks can be characterized as vertical relational structures. However, her relationship with her extended cousins and relatives, which we can assume to be more horizontal, is contingent upon how involved she is with them. Hence, the physical characteristics of her networks define certain features of her agency by those who are positioned within the network.

New social movement and resource mobilization scholars have been especially interested in social networks mechanisms which influence individuals. While the first group is interested in how networks help shape actors' collective identity, the second group treats networks as a resource. Nonetheless, both groups believe that, embeddedness in "preexisting networks" (Gamson 1990)has an impact on actors' decision and

participation in collective action (Diani 2002; Fernandez and McAdam 1989), as that very participation reflects a social choice that is itself "deeply embedded in daily interaction" (Gusfield 1994: 68). And that close embeddedness in social networks pushes "prospective members to the highest level of participation" (Passy 2003: 41).

D. Embeddedness versus Autonomy in the Literature

The following is an overview of arguments between social movement theorists, who emphasize culture and meaning and those who argue that embeddedness in culture and social networks is only effective on local and small scale levels whereas most collective action happens on a national and large-issues level. In this section I present two perspectives on this argument. First, I examine the social movement literature that has generally pre-supposed a devaluation of family and kinship as salient influences. Second, I review the political sociology literature that has allowed some elbow room for discussing embeddedness in social and kinship networks, most notably Charrad (2001) and Evans (1995).

Embeddedness was first brought into prominence in sociology by Mark Granovetter (1992) and the so called New Economic sociology, with its emphasis on tracing connectedness among agents as one of the determinants of economic prosperity, moving against a game theoretical model that concentrated solely on individual actors defined as utility maximizers. Embeddedness has since been taken up by the so called "cultural turn' in the social sciences, which has taken the connectedness of Granovetter's model and extrapolated it to the communicative sphere, seeing culture as mediated through its

expressive and sense-making aspects (Steinmetz 1999). George Steinmetz (1999: 4) criticizes classical Weberian and neo-Weberian theories for having "rarely understood culture as a central determinant or constitutive element of the modern Western state." Likewise, Charrad contends that "culture in the Islamic world is deployed politically and strategically" (2007a: 60). Cutting through this semantic profusion, Steinmetz (1999) and Charrad (2006b) suggest that culture is a central rather than residual category in political sociology.

Some social movement theorists see culture as the sphere of embedded relationships and symbolic resources where "people learn desires, moods, habits of thought and feeling" (Swidler 2001: 71). Social movements, which exist to provoke a change, exist, nonetheless, in cultures, and confronting configurations of power, in such a way that they initially capitalize on common "symbolic resources" and sometimes utilize cultural norms and meanings in advancing their cause. However, they replace these norms once the new norms become more common. Polletta (2006: 6) suggests that "activists have a real stake in using culture strategically, embracing dominant beliefs and conventions of representation where it serves them and refusing them where it does not. It is at the point where they reproduce such conventions in spite of their strategic liabilities that we should be able to see culture operating to constrain activists' options." Lebanese women's rights activists do use dominant cultural beliefs to serve advance their cause, but in so doing they transform the meaning of those beliefs into vehicles for empowerment, as we shall see in Chapter Six.

Social movement scholars have not included the family in their discussion of embeddedness in culture. A few exceptions briefly mention the family among a list of factors that influence the person's decision to join a movement. Overall, however, there is silence in the social movement literature on the role of family in the context of studying the private sphere of activism. I find this silence strange because most studies do recognize sexual preference, nationality, religion, race, class, and gender as both personal identities and causes for mobilization. However, discussions of family are limited to a handful of studies that casually include it among reasons for personal motivations (Evans and Boyte 1986; Goodwin et al. 2001; Gutman 1977; Johnston et al. 1994; Taylor and Whittier 1995; Tilly 1999).

Most notably among the Neo-Weberian who hold that kinship and family ties must necessarily weaken in order that civil society strengthen, is Charles Tilly. In his chapter "From Interactions to Outcomes in Social Movements" in *How social movements matter* edited by Giugni, McAdam, and Tilly, Charles Tilly briefly discusses kinship networks and embedded identities. He raises some interesting points that are relevant to the world outside Western Europe in a chapter that is generally aimed at taking sides in the "definitional struggle" over what to include under the rubric, "social movement." Tilly's chapter takes up a few cases to support his claim that movement agents employ varying strategies that sometimes utilize embedded identities and other times switch to their detached identities.

Trying to avoid a dichotomous logic that would categorically differentiate between Western and non-Western politics, Tilly asserts that embedded and detached collective identities are two extremes of a continuum between which most cases of collective identities fall (Tilly 1999: 264-5). During certain contentions and under specific circumstances, people deploy collective identities that are embedded in their social lives on the basis of "race, gender, class, ethnicity, locality, kinship, and so on" (Tilly 1999: 264). As we can tell from the casual inclusion of kinship in this list, Tilly, coming from a neo-Weberian perspective, supposedly Western model of political action, does not perceive kinship ties to be useful resources in mobilizing large collective action. However, he argues that embeddedness in those webs of localities and specific identities is small in scale and delivers *patronized* form of interactions that are *parochial* and *particularistic*, "relying on appeals to privileged intermediaries for intersection with more distant authorities" (Tilly 1999: 266). These kinds of relations are what we would have found in eighteen-century European politics.

Alternatively, under other conditions and in other scenarios, people turn to modern and detached identities. Those identities, in Tilly's opinion, are what correspond with forms of political contentions in modern Europe such as demonstrations, electoral campaigns, and public meetings. In those forms, participants asserted their identities as citizens and union or party members. With their "*national, modular,* and *autonomous,*" detached identities, social actors engage in claim-making interaction with power holders—who are socially distanced from them—over national issues (Tilly 1999: 266). However, within detached identities, members might identify with smaller forms of identities such as

"associational memberships, asserted nationalities, and legal categories such as 'minority', 'tribe', or 'handicapped persons'" (Tilly 1999: 265). Hence, by being embodied in detached modular identities, embedded identities become more autonomous.

Tilly represents a trend of analysis on social movements that sees identity construction often construed as happening outside or against kinship networks. Yet, certain features of social movements – in particular, recruiting participants, maintaining movements and using social settings to spread the movement – would seem to reference family as at least one setting. Thus, detached identities have better served social movements in their modern context, and the modern context has most often been within the developed societies of the West.

The second perspective on embeddedness and autonomy is offered by Charrad (2001) within the political sociology field from a Middle Eastern perspective. In her study of Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco, she shows that, historically, kin groups have functioned as a political entity oriented toward the collective defense of itself as a group (Charrad 2001). Building on Charrad's work, I present empirical evidence in the following chapters to show how members of the kin group tap into this political entity to not only enter public life but also advance their movement's goals.

Charrad uses the concept of "relative autonomy" to describe relations between states and kin groupings – to which she also refers as tribes when taking a historical perspective. In Charrad's framework, states are more or less autonomous from kin groupings depending

on time and place and in turn kin groupings can also be more or less autonomous from the authority of a centralizing state. Different moments in history offer different configurations of the state/tribe relationship, and different political opportunities. For instance, the state in Tunisia took advantage of its autonomy from tribes to reform the legal system and advance women's rights in Family Law. She writes: "The degree of reliance on—or autonomy from—tribal kin groupings in turn offered the political leadership of the newly formed national state different possibilities and incentives for the reform of family law" (2001: 7). At the same time, kin groups maintain relative autonomy from the central authorities: "The political significance of kinship was manifested in the relative autonomy of tribes or kin groupings from central authority—in whatever form central authority existed at a given time—and in the continuing tension between these two poles of power" (2001: 4).

Relative autonomy is also exercised by political elites and other social groups as exemplified in the analysis of Evans (1995) of the conditions under which states in newly industrializing countries have driven successful industrial development. When comparing Korea, Brazil, India and Zaire, he found that neither autonomy nor embeddedness alone is enough to ensure industrial development. Rather, he argues that states must enjoy a degree of *embedded autonomy*. The state is autonomous when bureaucracy is rationalized and protected from the manipulation of powerful rent-seeking groups outside of the state. However, the state must be embedded by ensuring that state elites are involved in social networks and other relations that connect them with major players in civil society.

The discussion thus far has placed embedded –or relative-- autonomy in relation to political experiences during a crucial time of the state's existence. While Evans and Charrad emphasize the embedded or relative autonomy of state institutions, their evaluation of the concept is applicable to macro structures that compose the state, showing that political institutions are dependent on trajectories in their social environments. Charrad and Evans point to two important networks that operate upon these political processes in the non-Western societies they studied: kinship networks in Charrad and social networks in Evans.

Focusing on the micro level, my approach explores kinship networks as the connective resource by which agendas can be executed within social structures and the condition by which individual agency can be expressed. I build on the classification of women activists in two non-exclusive overlapping groups as relatively-embedded in and relatively-autonomous from kinship settings. While activists and political women might fit the autonomous category in one area of their activism, none of them are either exclusively autonomous or embedded. However, my analysis yielded relatively equal amount of opinions that support the existence of the two categories, autonomous and embedded. These non-exclusive categories which emerged from my data, obtained from interviews observations and analysis of Lebanese activists' own writings, helped me to understand the significance of the family in activism.

In addition to being durable social structures, kin groups fulfill reproductive, economic, social, and educational functions. With these functions, kin groups could be useful to

social movement actors and they also provide them with connective networks and enabling resources. I will discuss next social capital being one of the valuable resources that the kinship system offers social movement actors.

E. Building Social Capital: Contra Putnam

In this section, I examine two approaches to social capital in the social movement literature. I first analyze how social capital has been theorized as an essential factor in the degree of civic participation of individuals and groups using Putnam's approach. Next, by applying Bourdieu's definition of social capital as collective credit, I examine the underdeveloped thesis that kin groups can provide social actors with social capital. For the purpose of my study of women's movement in Lebanon, I find that Putnam's analysis has shortcomings whereas Bourdieu's definition of social capital as a set of durable networks is more useful.

Alexis de Tocqueville and Robert Putnam (1993) have claimed that social capital is associated with the presence of civic society, which in turn impact the likelihood and maintenance of democratization in a country. Although the relationship between social capital, civic society and democracy is not the focus of his study, Young (2006: 59) argues that civic engagement and voter turnout are not necessarily "the best indicators of the health of civil society." Others, like Tilly (1999) and Paterson (2000) conceive social capital as contributing to the construction of deliberative democracy through being obtained by means of membership in autonomous and associational social networks (See Cohen 1997). While most scholars agree that, in order for the acquisition of social capital

to be available to everyone, a certain level of urbanization, development, and democratization is required (See most notably Fukuyama 2001; Huntington and Harrison 2000; Inglehart 1990; Kornhauser 1959 among others), they often disagree on social capital's means of attainment.

Putnam's perception of civil society relies upon on the dominance of detached identities and associations for its vigor. In his model, repeating a motif we have traced from Weber onwards, civil society must be sustained by those networks only. Tocqueville, Putnam recognized, had the insight to understand the novelty of the free, non-governmental organizations he came across in his observation of early nineteenth century American communities. In these organizations, people were treated as equals and were given access to forums in which they could freely express their opinions and concerns to authorities. In his 1993 study, Putnam saw the phenomenon described by Tocqueville as an early template for the realization of civic society and the generation of trust that lead to successful democracy, although by 2000 in *Bowling Alone* (2000), he was expressing pessimism about the decline of social capital in the American democracy in particular.

In *Making Democracy Work*, Putnam (1993) argues that in a civic community, citizens pursue "self-interest" that is properly understood and defined in the context of broader public needs. Vigorous civil society is an essential feedback mechanism that permits good governance, that is, governance that adapts to ongoing situations, and strengthens democracy. Apparently, "Tocqueville was right: Democratic government is strengthened, not weakened, when it faces a vigorous civil society" (Putnam et al. 1993: 182).

But in *Bowling Alone* (2000: 403), Putnam finds signs of a weakened social capital manifested "in the things that have vanished almost unnoticed – neighborhood parties and get-togethers with friends, the unreflective kindness of strangers, the shared pursuit of the public good rather than a solitary quest for private goods." Thus, he concludes that civic participation in forums that allow individuals to "protect themselves from abuses of power by their political leaders" such as "voluntary associations, from churches to professional societies to Elks clubs and reading groups" began their descent since the sixties (Putnam et al. 1993: 338).

According to that perspective, as Salamon (1993) points out, civil society constitutes "a separate sphere [that] preserves social values and counteracts the excesses of the state and of individuals. A rich network of autonomous groups protects isolated individuals from the overweening power of the state and creates social bonds that constrain individualism and make cooperation possible" (Couto and Guthrie 1999: 64-5). Social scientists of non-Western cultures have long remarked on the narrowness of the example set out of which the civil society paradigm arose, with its idealization of and overemphasis on the European and Anglo-American experience (See for instance Jamal 2007; Jelin et al. 1996; Mahoney 2001; Norton 2005; Reis 1996; Roberts 1995; Wood and Roberts 2005). Such a model presupposed both the defining value of individualism and the sociopolitical conditions that go along with that.

But even in the American and European space, this conception of civil society does not fit the heterogeneity of the social whole, especially in regard to minorities, inner city dwellers, or women. In describing the struggle for freedom from slavery, Gutman (1977) found that the black family provided its members with "social space" that "shielded them… from the cultural dominance… of the planter class" (Evans and Boyte 1986: 29). The African-American family has set the blueprint for its distinctive culture forms and institutions. Its ties were instrumental to the survival of tradition and identity, "family ties became the model for other relationships, teaching a respect for the wisdom and experiences of the old and binding unrelated adults to one another (Evans and Boyte 1986: 29). Its socializing patterns were applied to "creating means through which folklore, music, and values could be transmitted" (Evans and Boyte 1986: 29). Further, Stack's *All Our Kin* (1974) shows that "survival in poor urban communities frequently depends on close interaction with kin and friends in similar situations" (Portes 1998: 13).

The connection between civil society and social capital, as constructed by Putnam has shortcomings. His analysis of social capital is based on non-durable networks that are constructed and maintained by the convergence of self interests only. Should we include durable networks in the Putnam paradigm, we might find that although Americans are indeed bowling alone in 2000, they are always connected to their family, friends and hometowns. This aspect ought to be counted in measuring the civicness of a society.

This leads us to explore the relevance of durable networks to the construction of social capital. Bourdieu (1986)and Coleman (1988) and other social scientists have highlighted

the relevance of informal networks and embedded identities to building social capital and encouraging civic society (See also Bourdieu 1979; 1980; 1986; Coleman 1988; Melucci 1995; 1989; and Touraine 1981). Bourdieu (1986: 249) defines social capital as "the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationship of mutual acquaintance and recognition." Bourdieu's definition may be summarized using Schensul's (1999: 6) conception of social capital as the answer to the following question: "Who trusts whom?" In this sense, to be trusted by a large group can be considered a form of social capital that women would inherit from their powerful kin group and which they could possibly utilize in their political careers.

A key factor in the social capital discussion is the individual's level of trust to enter into the public space, which holds out many potential hazards. As Lewis and Weigert (1985) have pointed out, "from a sociological perspective, trust must be conceived as a property of collective units (ongoing dyads, groups and collectivities), not of isolated individuals." Trust, indeed, as a social, as opposed to a psychological, phenomenon entails interaction between individuals. Seen in this way, trust "is a key concept in the explanation of why certain types of social ties are more important than others for individual participation" (Passy 2003: 41).

In this manner, social capital, like other forms of capital is manifested as a set of assets or liabilities. Social capital is viewed positively when it leads to trust and is produced by it, and is a liability insofar as the individual is associated with socially negative or

stigmatized traits. Bourdieu (1993) found that the mere name of Ali for young French men from Moroccan descent automatically put them at a disadvantage with other French citizens. Likewise, in Lebanon, kin groups' low or unrecognized social status, community origin from the village or the poor-suburb, or lack of confessional connections, can all reflect negative manifestation of kinship's social capital.

Through institutional maintenance "individual and collective" actors produce and reproduce "consciously or unconsciously" social relationships that are "directly useable in the short or long term" and transform "contingent relations, such as those of neighborhood, the workplace, or even kinship, into relationships that are at once necessary and elective, implying durable obligations subjectively felt (feelings of gratitude, respect, friendship, etc.) or institutionally guaranteed rights" (Bourdieu 1986: 249). These informal networks are prevalent in the "Family, local community, church, and the whole network of informal interpersonal relationships" but according to Nisbet (1962: 54), they "have ceased to play a determining role in our institutional systems of mutual aid, welfare, education, recreation, and economic production and distribution" in Western societies.

While social scientists consider trust that is provided by families as collectively-owned and aggregate—based on institutionalized relationships, Fukuyama argues that familial trust is not applicable to political and social life because in Chinese and Latin American societies, "Families are strong and cohesive, but it is hard to trust strangers, and levels of honesty and cooperation in public life are much lower" (Fukuyama 2001: 99). Other

social movement theorists find it imperative for trust to be cultivated from autonomous relationships fostered in the context of civil society in democratic settings.

Again, the theme is that family and kinship networks must weaken in order for the political domain, the condition for civil society, to gain its required autonomy. Given how this pattern has dominated political sociology, we should not be surprised that Putnam (1993) is not alone in following this logic. Tilly (2003), for instance, argues that the development of trust networks outside family ties is necessary for the promotion of democratization. Although Putnam (1993) recognizes kinship as another form of horizontal networks—which are useful to building civicness—he does not see it as an explanatory factor that accounts for the differences between groups' civic engagement.

These theorists – and Putnam in particular—in using the European-American model as a privileged example, are saying that social capital is supposed to politically enact agendas that presuppose more and more intense individualism. The theoretical center does not hold elsewhere as evident in Jamal's (2007: 95) argument that "interpersonal trust as a dimension of social capital on its own, in settings that are nondemocratic, reveals very little about the prospects of patterns of behavior important for democratization."

The gap in this literature lies in excluding the contributions of kinship as a system of mobilization for collective action and as a source of social capital. If we consider family as an important analytic unit for studying social movements, and one that might actually

be a positive resource for social movement activists, then we can turn next to explore how embeddedness in the kinship system has an impact on women's movements.

F. Women's Movements and the Family

This study focuses on the centrality of the family to women's activism in Lebanon where, as in other non-individualist societies, crucial social capital is gained from family membership and is fostered through its extended networks. To conceptualize the family as an empowering structure of women's agency is pragmatic yet challenging. The first challenge spurs from the apparent contradiction between family privilege and the western belief in fairness, which is to say that not everyone descends from a connected family, nor should familial credentials be rewarded, ideally, with different treatment. While western societies are differentiated by socioeconomic class divisions as an inevitable byproduct of a capitalist society, meritocracy remains, at least theoretically, the ultimate indicator of civil and democratic societies.

Incorporating the family as a source of women's empowerment poses a second challenge. The family is not always empowering, an insight which is seized upon by radical feminism (Bell and Klein 1996; Thompson 2001; Willis 1992), to suggest that the family as a male dominated institution is inherently disempowering for women. While my study demonstrates family support for women's rights, I agree with radical feminists that the struggle against the oppression of the family structure is not to be underestimated. The role of the family in advancing women's rights also comes with restrictions on the autonomy and expression of women's agency. And as my dissertation shows, family

support can vary tremendously according to social class, community origin, and level of educational attainment.

In this section I explore where the family as an institution and a source of social networks and capital belongs in the analysis of the women's movement in Western feminist discourse. Family, here, includes the roles of both genders, which is why I also compare feminist theories that have a fuller conception of men's contributions to everyday feminism vis-à-vis those who have envisioned women's agency as autonomous.

Historically, women have been confined to resources and networks within the realm of their family's boundaries (Freeman 1999). The women's movement emerged in the nineteenth-century in the United States, Europe, the Middle East and elsewhere as a result of elite women's engagement in public advocacy, who were influenced by their families' commitment to reform and social justice (Rupp and Taylor 1987: 168). In the United States, female descendents of suffrage foremothers used their ancestry as a source of social capital, "Nora Stanton Barney, daughter of militant suffragist Harriot Stanton Blatch and granddaughter of pioneer sufferfragist Elizabeth Cady Stanton, proudly claimed her heritage and used it to support her work for the Equal Rights Amendment. Her daughter, Rhoda Jenkins, carried the family commitment to feminism into the 1980s as vice president of the Greenwich, Connecticut, branch of the National Organization for Women" (Rupp and Taylor 1987: 108-110).

When the women's movement succeeded in gaining significant political gains at the turn of the century and later guaranteed additional policy reforms until 1945, many felt that the women's movement completed its mission and became dormant in the United States until the rebirth of the second wave of feminism in the 1960s. However, Rupp and Taylor track the historical trajectories that enabled feminists to maintain their identity and organizations. Upon fulfilling the goals of the first wave of feminism, the movement had to find ways of sustaining itself. How did activists build trust networks to maintain their momentum after they had achieved their immediate political demands?

Both scholars and activists have generally turned a deaf ear to Rupp and Taylor's claim: that post-1945 feminism was a kind of a family legacy. Recruiting of new members relied on personal networks especially through family connections. Women activists recruited their daughters especially, as well as other family members. This type of recruitment through family member, friend, etc. "ensured the stability of the women's rights movement, but it also perpetuated homogeneity and exclusiveness" failing to reach outside those personal circles to create a mass mobilization of women (Rupp and Taylor 1987: 110).

There is no doubt that historically, family responsibilities have been the largest impediment to women's participation in civic life, according to Rupp and Taylor (1987). They assert that feminists confronted a competition in their lives between emancipation into the public sphere and commitment to their families, the latter of which they often felt came first and that they could not neglect (although this was not true to all early

feminists as evident in the life trajectory of Elsie Clews Parsons and Emma Goldman). The very fact that they were confronted with choices that seemed to exclude each other (the family role vs. the public role), while men were not, was indicative of the patriarchal structure. With the emergence of the second wave of feminism, many indicted marriage and the nuclear family as key drivers in the oppression of women and making sure that they are "kept in their place" and prevented from developing autonomous identities (Evans 2003: 55).

Domestic responsibilities which were primarily the woman's became a burden to participation and mobilization. Women had to choose either to stay at home or live separately from their husbands for period of time while engaging in feminist work. But these poles don't exclude a medium solution: the pitching-in of supportive family members, which has always lowered barriers to participation (Rupp and Taylor 1987: 95).

1. FAMILY AND AGENCY IN FEMINIST THEORY

Since discussions of women's agency were initiated by traditional radical feminists, like Firestone (1970) and Millett (1970), male dominance, seen as an abiding feature of patriarchy, has been at the core of the problem of women's rights. Therefore, radical feminists of the era advocated various forms of female separatism that would empower women to become economically, civilly and politically independent and free of any compromise with the ultimately irredeemable patriarchal system (Bell and Klein 1996; Firestone 1970; Willis 1992). As theory was translated into fact with the rise of street-level feminist activism, some social scientists noted a corresponding rise in the alienation

between men and feminism. For instance, Heath (1987: 1) claims that “Men’s relation to feminism is an impossible one. This is not said sadly nor angrily (though sadness and anger are both known and common reactions) but politically.” From a perspective that tightly connects patriarchy to the gender of the roles of those who function within it, the attempt to advance a feminist agenda by way of families, by way of alliances with men, is condemned by its contradictions to fail.

The critique of patriarchy that has been championed by radical feminists and echoed by some postmodernist, psychoanalyst and liberal feminists and others (like Butler 2004; Friedan 1974) is central to this study. Postmodern feminist Grosz (Grosz 1987: 475-6) in fact labels patriarchy as “a regulated system organizing and placing men and women in positions of different, unequal value and unequal access to self-determination. Patriarchal oppression provides the context, support, and meaning for sexist acts of discrimination.” Similarly, Buechler (1990: 114) argues that because family and marriage have influenced women more than any other social institution, “It was here that social practices and cultural norms established and reinforced female oppression and dependence. Norms of romantic love, compulsory heterosexuality, and the motherhood mandate comprised the socially rewarded path that perpetuated the sex-role system of patriarchy.”

Although I agree with the view that the patriarchal system has been oppressive of women, I suggest that this claim fails to see patriarchy as a multifaceted system. Several schools of feminism have not paid enough attention to the practical gains reaped from the inclusion of men and the family in the struggle for women’s rights . This claim might be

less relevant in Western societies, where the emphasis is more on agency enacted on the individual level. However, in the Middle East, the family is the basic constituent of the social fabric. Hence, analyzing the experience of feminists who have engaged their family and male partners is worthy of study.

2. COUPLE'S ACTIVISM

Following the standard Weberian model we examined in the previous section, scholars like Harry (1970) conclude that the family is an unlikely institution to provide encouragement and assistance to women's independent agency except in special cases. However, others suggest that in some circumstances marital status was influential in increasing the wife's community engagement. In a study on church activism among farm couples, Wilson, Simpson and Jackson (1987: 881) found that the couples' "impact on each other is far greater than any other component of the model" and that "the most powerful influence on the church activism of either husband or wife is the activism of their spouse." Yet, while religious organizations have traditionally been classified as part of the female's world, men were more likely than women to influence their spouses' voluntary involvements [in the church]" (Wilson et al. 1987: 876).

Searching for couple activism in the heart of the Western tradition, I found the case of Elizabeth and Henry Stanton, the early American activist couple. Henry and Elizabeth Stanton, both lawyers, met as activists in the abolitionist movement. They later married and had seven children. Elizabeth Stanton became a prominent pioneer in the struggle for women's legal rights. She wrote: "My husband made a very eloquent speech in favor of

admitting the women delegates" to the World's Anti-slavery Convention in England (Stanton 1993: 79). The Stantons' marriage lasted forty-seven years, despite long distance and travel commitments, and ended with Henry's death in 1887 (Baker 2005). Until the birth of the second wave of feminism in the 1960s, the Stanton's case was far from abnormal. In 1948, Florence Kitchelt, head of the Connecticut Committee for the League of Nations Association, wrote that she and her husband considered the home a "cooperative institution, not to be maintained at the cost of the development of one of the partners" (Rupp and Taylor 1987: 94). Similarly, Helen Hunt West, the national chairman of the Woman's Party, considered her husband as her partner: "Byron and I have always felt so much a part of the Woman's Party family… As you know Byron and I spent four happy years there, and I am sure he worked about as hard for our cause as I did, and certainly he was heart and soul in it." These cases were not just about the convergence of interest between spouses – rather, spousal cooperation had an impact on activists' ability to engage in activism for women's rights by creating a model for non-conflictual, emancipatory relationships.

The social capital that American feminists received from their husbands is evident in the testimony of Marguerite Rawalt, a member of the in the National Federation of Business and Professional Women and the national Association of Women Lawyers. She wrote that her husband's "constant interest in and approval of her activities contributed significantly to her success and satisfaction in organization work." Similarly, Margaret Hickey indicated that throughout her thirty-nine-year marriage her husband's support was invaluable. Another woman who was involved in a variety of women's and progressive

organizations in Columbus, Ohio, Mary Miller, had her husband supported even when he did not agree with her. His famous response to her controversial stance was: “If you go to jail, you’ll need me, and if you go to heaven, I’ll go on your coattails” (Rupp and Taylor 1987: 95).

This historical account illuminates that couples’ activism, or at least husbands’ support, was an important aspect of activism for women’s rights in the discourse of U.S. feminist movement. I find it hard to believe that men, who were supportive and instrumental until the 1960s, all of the sudden dropped from the picture as the more radical forms of feminism emerged. An intriguing question that this study does not attempt to answer is: Why were supportive men taken out of the feminist and activism in its second and third waves?

These issues should open up a conceptual space not only to view feminist activity in the Middle East, but, in return, to see missing moments in the social picture in the West, which have previously been dismissed as ‘backwards’. Is couples’ activism for women’s rights prevalent *only* in nonwestern societies, and specifically in Middle Eastern societies because of the peculiar centrality of the family? There is a dissenting tradition in the literature of the last thirty years that expressly supports a model of “political familism,” (Roth 2004) which arose among minority cultures in the U.S. in the seventies, where the cultural dominance of individualism was, traditionally, not as strong, and the tactical advance towards economic and political equality was cast in family terms consonant with the traditions of these groups.

3. ACCESS TO POWER IN MOURNING

In the United States, Lebanon and elsewhere, widows and daughters of deceased men gain access to power by continuing the legacy and filling the political position vacated by their male kin members. Hence, the "women in black" is an idiosyncratic manner to describe how women enter politics, wearing black as they mourn their late powerful husbands or fathers. I came back from Lebanon thinking it was a Lebanese phenomenon or something from the past, or the East, or the quasi-democratic countries, until I investigated the feminist movement in the United States and started checking reference around the world. I found that "political widows" had the most advantages. They had their husbands' prior "status, name, and good will with the independence to forge [their] own path" (Freeman 2000: 64).

Women's only path to power has been through family affiliation with a very few recent exceptions like Angela Merkel the current chancellor in Germany and Margaret Thatcher, the Iron woman and former Prime Minister of Great Britain. This is not to argue that women have not reached prestigious administrative and legislative positions using the same social track as men, but as this relates to women politicians, the record is more complex.

Freeman (2000) informs us that political wives emerged as a phenomenon in American presidential campaigns in 1856. Women not only campaigned on behalf of their husbands, as they do today, but also most of their credentials as autonomous politicians were not at all autonomous. "In politics as in the rest of society, what a woman's husband

did have a greater impact on her fate, and her status, than what she did" (Freeman 2000: 64). In fact, since the 1950s and 1960s "the most prominent women campaigners [have been] candidates' wives." Their job was and remains to help reassure voters about the good family status of their husbands (Freeman 2000: 197-8). Typically, those women left politics when their husband did (Freeman 2000: 64). Women could not rise to power in the presence of their husbands. In fact, five out of the first ten women senators filled vacancies left by their husbands (Freeman 2000: 231-2). Moreover, "The two women elected governor in the 1920s, and the third elected in 1966, replaced their husbands." Women were perceived as good temporary solution to hold the seat open for the men who were expected to run for it (Freeman 2000: 231-2).

Daughters were also empowered to reach leadership roles. For example, Elizabeth Cady Stanton was the daughter of a lawyer and later became one herself. Barbara Porges was born into politics and became known as the "boss" of her district by the early 1900s. The daughter of a Tammany chieftain, Elisabeth Marbury, "was well known in New York City as a play-broker and author's representative when she became the first national committeewoman from New York, a post she held until her death in 1933" (Freeman 2000: 168). In 1856 Jessie Benton Frémont, the daughter of a U.S. Senator became popular in her husband's campaign as the first Republic Party candidate for President. Anna Ella Carroll, daughter of a former Maryland governor publically supported the reelection of President Millard Fillmore for the American (Know-Nothing) Party (Freeman 2000: 33-4).

International and historical examples of political widows and daughters are numerous as well, ranging from Zenobia the Queen of the Palmyrene Empire in the Third Century who came to power after the death of her husband king Septimius Odaenathus, to contemporary female figures such as Benazir Bhutto (the daughter Zulfikar Ali Bhutto); Indira Gandhi (the daughter of Jawaharlal Nehru); Daw Aung San Suu Kyi (the daughter of Aung San); the Italian-born Sonia Ghandi who rose to power in India after the death of her husband Rajiv Gandhi; and, Argentina's current President Cristina Elizabet Fernández who was elected to replace her husband former President Néstor Kirchner.

While some scholars and activists look askance at the rise of these women, their entry into politics has paved the way to increasing women's participation in the public sphere and women acquiring power. The feminist literature has been mostly silent about the political roles and contributions of political wives with the exception of Freeman's (2000) study on political women. She features wives' political role in United States politics as fulfilling one of two functions. The first is campaigning on behalf of their husband, "in the 1950s and 1960s the most prominent women campaigners were candidates' wives. Their job was to tell the voter that their husbands were good family men" (Freeman 2000: 198). And the second function as I indicated earlier was "to hold the seat open for the men who were expected to run for it" (p. 231). While the standards have definitely changed since the 1920s and 1960s, I do not believe that scholarship has followed this trend.

To sum up some of the questions addressed in this section: In the literature of women's and gender studies, I analyzed the concept of women's agency through the lenses of radical and liberal feminist theories, showing problems with radical feminist separatism and its theorizing of patriarchy as total and uniform. I provided a historical overview that illustrates the timid mention of the family in the first wave of Western feminism and I found that the discourse of the second feminist wave has paid little attention to the patriarchal family as a source of social capital and a set of networks that can be mobilized for the advancement of feminist movements. Additionally, I traced couples' activism within the feminist movement in the United States up until the seventies. I showed the theoretical presuppositions which, carried over from the Weberian tradition I analyzed in the previous section, has determined the omission of the positive impact of family relationships on progressive social movements and its devaluation in the discourse of modern feminist theory.

G. Middle Eastern Gender Studies

Middle Eastern feminism cannot be understood unless we grasp two of the factors that determine its image and form: a) the importance of kin groups in the Middle East; and b) the importance of nationalism in the Middle East. The first factor, kinship, may be specific to the Middle East or more significant in the region (although other patriarchal societies share commonalities on this factor). The second factor is more complex and it is widely expressed in the views of Third World Feminists. A history of colonialism and the existence of long term Western hegemony in the Middle East mark all political movements in the Middle East, which not only look inward, towards achieving change in

a given community or state, but also look outwards, to the West, in as much as the West provides both resources and limits.

1. THE FAMILY AND KINSHIP FACTOR

With a strong focus on kinship, Charrad points out that family and kin groups are the fundamental social factors confronting all organizations in the Middle East. She observes: "At the heart of the issue [of women's rights in the Islamic world is] the fundamental organization of society and the place of individuals and kin-based collectivities within it" (2001: 5). Despite variations in the significance of kin groups in the Middle East and North Africa, "The common denominator in the region is a history in which kin-based identities have been a central part of society and politics" (Charrad 2007a: 67). The key difference for her, however, is the degree of the significance of these kin-based identities. In the same vein, in studying family relations in Lebanon, Joseph explains that equivalent to the sexual contract in the West is the 'kin contract' which has been constructed to reflect "the ideal of family love organized within a patriarchal structure of rights and responsibilities…The romantic lure of the kin contract has been grounded in material realities in which kin relationalities have been, for the Lebanese, the core of social identity, economic stability political security, and religious affiliation and the first (often last) line of security" (Joseph and Slyomovics 2001: 116). This juxtaposition of the sexual and kin contract is useful in appointing to the fundamental difference between Middle Eastern and Western construction of gender relations. The theory of the sexual contract is an extension of the social contract (Pateman 1988), an ideal fiction used to discuss the founding of legal orders in society. Similar to Hegel and Rousseau's theories

of the Master-slave and the social contract, Pateman (1988: 3) posits that sexual contracts, such as that between a husband and wife, entrenched the subordination of women to men in the legal nexus between subjects in the state, making women subject to the control of men – notably, fathers and husbands.

The literature on Middle Eastern women has highlighted that kinship "has contributed critically to the disenfranchising of women and juniors through the complex and paradoxical operations of a "care/controls" paradigm supported by the state and religious sects" (Joseph 2001: 108). Joseph claims that the kin contract extends to the much different family and kinship relations in the Middle East, where a "care/control" paradigm has not only been about the power of males and seniors but also about disciplining them. While men can exercise control over women, they are also obliged to provide for them and care for their well-being even against their own desire. This care/control paradigm, prevalent in Middle Eastern cultures, helps us see that a relational understanding of individuals' position in society is central to any interpretation of those cultures.

Middle Eastern scholars point that kin groups are not only a source of economic, emotional and social support for men and women, but they also function as the primary agent of social control and welfare (Bourquia et al. 1996; Joseph 2000; Tucker 1998). Thus, given their function as an essential structure within the political and social systems operating in the Middle East and in the Islamic world in general, kin groups have been viewed as oppressing women to the extent that the political and cultural oppression of

women exists as a feature of these societies (Afkhami 1995; Kandiyoti 1991). In a nutshell, "Given the centrality of family, its patriarchal structure is crucial in understanding gender relationships in the Middle East. Family both supports and suppresses women. This paradox of support and suppression, love and power, and generosity and competition compels both attachment to and struggle within families" (Joseph and Slyomovics 2001: 10).

Charrad (2001) and Joseph (2000; 2001) emphasize the significance of kin groups not only to constructing personal identities but also to economic relations and political loyalties. Charrad argues that in The "Republics of Cousins," (using Germaine Tillion's term), a strong *asabiyya*[7] is "advantageous" and "instrumental" for political survival (2001: 23). Joseph agrees with Charrad's argument and claims that "Lebanese regularly have turned to kin in times of need for loans, networking, witty (brokerage), references' jobs, housing, and other financial assistance" (2001: 120). In her opinion, "Kinship has been as much about accepting the structures of patriarchal authorizer and the demands of kin responsibilities as it has been about receiving the benefits of kin nurturance" (Joseph 2001: 121). While none of my interviewees celebrates the kinship system, Lebanese women are not rushing to jettison it, either, nor are they, for the most part, denying themselves the benefits of the patriarchal connections it offers, or its nurturance, or the enabling role it plays in their social and political positioning.

[7] Ibn Khaldun's *asabiyya* means "solidarity," "*esprit de clan,*" "unifying structural cohesion" or "agnation in action."

2. POSTCOLONIAL NATIONALISM

Feminism in the Middle East is best understood within the context of nationalism. Women's rights include the de-facto realities of globalization, imperialism, colonialism and the universalized western hegemony of culture, politics and economics (Fleischmann 2003). Women's entry to the public sphere has adapted to the cultural ideals and national agendas. In reference to the Tunisian women's movement, Charrad found that "When women were politically active in the 1950s—and some highly educated women were—they defended nationalism rather than feminist cause centered on issues of women's autonomy and gender justice" (Charrad 2007b: 1519). Likewise, Badran' s explanation of Arab feminism emphasizes the relevance of nationalist claims in the Middle Eastern women's movements (1995: 223):

> The story of Arab feminism is a story of intersections between feminisms and nationalisms—both those identified with individual Arab countries and those transcending territorial boundaries. It is also a story about disjunctures between national feminisms of colonized Eastern countries and Western-dominated international feminism. The institutionalization of Arab feminism emerged from a coalescence in solidarity around a nationalist cause, the Palestine cause. Arab feminism was also, in part, born out of the limitations of international feminism.

The plight of Middle Eastern social movements, caught between the civil society goals and the perception that links them to the imperialist policies of the West, is perhaps best addressed through a reflexive approach of deconstructing concepts such as rights and citizenship. Colonialism in Lebanon was a force of modernity in political and cultural

matters, but it was not so in regards to women's rights. Prior to the French mandate in Lebanon, women enjoyed many more "citizenship" rights than they did during colonial times or than they do in post-colonial Lebanon. Despite embracing a contemporary conception of kinship, a number of Lebanese feminists refuse to fall into the danger of the modernity trajectory—that divide the world into pre-modern, modern and post modern—and instead join the anti-colonialists, or modern colonialists to use Jacqui Alexander's term (1997) in reflecting how their civil society and social movements are far more complex than what is presented in the primordial versus modern binary paradigm (Geertz 1973). Lebanese feminist Jean Said Makdisi—the sister of the famous Edward Said (known in postcolonial studies for his work on exposing literary and political Orientalism)—argues that her feminism embraces what western theorists have perceived as inherent contradictions:

> This false dichotomy is precisely the one which pits "modern" against "traditional women. In this vision, a "modern" woman is usually and loosely, not to say carelessly, defined as one who is "educated," and/or "working," and/or "well-dressed." I use each of these words with self-conscious caution as they are, though apparently simple and naïve, in fact loaded with hidden meanings and are responsible for half the falseness of the false dichotomy. The "traditional" woman, in this same view, is often but not necessarily wearing national costume, or, if she is a Muslim, even *hijab*; she looks after home and children, and is dependent on her husband for her livelihood. The variations in these formulae are endless; what remains constant is the fuzzy thinking and the governing mythology (Makdisi 1996: 238).

Instead of giving in to the western binary way of perceiving the social world, the idea of relative autonomy or embedded autonomy serves to show that although kinship can be oppressive, women are wise not to discard it from their depot of resources.

The concept of citizenship is another area to which I apply the reflexive approach. Citizenship is usually conceived as a relationship between the individual and the state that "changes as the evolution of citizenship redefines what is private and what is public" (Wood and Roberts 2005: 138). However, this conception ignores that citizenship is an outcome of the changing dynamics of the law and society and a feature of norms that separate the public and private spheres. Often, western perspectives of Arab cultures have wrongly portrayed their rights and membership as stagnant castes. However, the proliferation of transnational NGOs, the expansion of means of communication, and governmental changes in compliance with the United Nations' Conference in Beijing recommendation have all kept citizen relations constantly changing. In separating public and private spheres, Joseph and Slyomovics (2001: 12) assert that such distinction in the Middle Eastern societies is even more problematic and probably unrealizable. They posit that in the Middle East kinship and community are crucial elements of social life and "State institutions and civil society do not operate independently of kin-based and communal relations… The boundaries in this triangulation of state, civil society, and kinship or private domain are highly fluid."

While feminists in the West, until recently, did not have to engage with the Middle East at all, every political movement in the Middle East has to engage with the West, in as

much as Middle Eastern politics has had to respond to Western hegemony throughout the past century. Yet, popular approaches to gender vis-à-vis feminism have been structured with a transmitting versus receiving ends. Western theorizing about gender, sexuality, and the family has been bestowed on the generalized "Third World" via international organizations. Rarely are the views from the receiving end of this relation considered for their theoretical contributions. Middle Eastern, and other non-western feminists, have often protested, as we have seen above with Jean Said Makdisi , that they too have contributions to be considered.

H. Conclusion: Feminists and Kin

In this chapter, I locate my research within the matrix formed by the literature of social movements, social capital, feminist movements and Middle Eastern gender studies, which, as I have shown, possesses underutilized synergies for the social scientist. I have exposed limitations in the Western perception of these social networks as hostile to civil society, at least as they posit that an individualistic ethos is necessary to weaken them in order to set the conditions for progressive social movements. I have shown how the Weberian legacy has impacted, to a certain degree, social movement and feminist theories, even the radical feminists, which, in spite of their total critique of male domination in the West, still accepts the individualistic template. Finally, I have proposed to move away from the consistent pattern that neglects kinship networks.

CHAPTER TWO: METHODS AND DATA

A. Introduction

This chapter summarizes the practical lessons that I learned while doing field research in Lebanon in the summer of 2006. While I describe the methodological approach I followed in applying qualitative strategies, I also touch upon two practical additions to it that I improvised once I started doing my research during that fateful summer. The first lesson I learned was how to wisely maneuver using my own extended kinship networks and social capital. My family name and connections helped me gain access when all other means failed, and established trust with activists when eyebrows were sometimes raised at my status as an outsider. The second lesson that I learned as I abruptly terminated my research in Lebanon during the 2006 war, was a painful one. On July 12th, 2006 a war erupted between Hezbollah and Israel in Lebanon and led to massive structural destruction and loss of lives in Lebanon. While trapped with my two little children in the middle of the war and under the wrath of heavy bombing, I learned how to assess danger as well as limited and dangerous rescue options. With the support of my family and faculty from Austin, Texas I gained the courage to make the decision to evacuate without protection as I anticipated the level of international intervention and ironed out all the logistics. It was a lesson in survival, which made me all the more appreciative of the precarious situation with which those who struggle for human rights in Lebanon must cope.

This chapter is also about scientific research. It is about connecting theory and methods, and it is about generating viable empirical evidence. In this chapter, I first locate my theoretical approach in relations to my methodology, which combines reflexivity and feminism. Second, I discuss the sampling strategies and the data collection methods I used, including interviews, participant observation and content analysis. Third, I describe my role as a researcher, my language competency, and how I gained access to my respondents. Fourth, I give an overview of the data I gathered. Fifth, I discuss my analysis of the data in relation to its limitations, noting, as well, some important political considerations that impinged upon my fieldwork.

B. Theory and Methods

The extended case approach facilitates the knowledge of complex social phenomena because, according to Burawoy (1998: 5), it "applies reflexive science to ethnography in order to extract the general from the unique, to move from the 'micro' to the 'macro', and to connect the present to the past in anticipation of the future, all by building on preexisting theory." Studying Lebanese women's rights activism in reflexive terms allows us to move from the micro level, which concentrates on the uniqueness of these women's experiences, to the macro level, which projects general conditions applicable to similar cases among women living in Muslim, Middle Eastern or other "non-western" societies with similar religious, familial and historical constraints. Snow and Trom (2002: 147) define core characteristics of the case study method as including: (a), the investigation and analysis of an instance or variant of some bounded social phenomenon that (b), seeks to generate richly detailed and 'thick' elaboration of the phenomenon

studied through (c), the use and triangulation of multiple methods or procedures including but not limited to qualitative techniques, based on interviews, participant observation and contents analysis. In this case study, I apply an engaged rather than detached approach in investigating and analyzing Middle Eastern women's rights activism. Through this reflexive approach, which I discuss next, I generate a thick elaboration of how activists utilize their resources provided to them by the kinship system.

1. REFLEXIVITY

This dissertation is grounded in the concept of reflexivity (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 16-17), and Burawoy's *extended case method* model (1998). Reflexivity provides an epistemological blueprint that informed my sample selection, my collection data method and my analysis. "Reflexive science has its pay-off, enabling the exploration of broad historical patterns and macrostructure *without* relinquishing either ethnography or science" (Burawoy 1998: 6). Bourdieu defines reflexivity as "…the systematic exploration of the "unthought categories of thought which delimit the thinkable and predetermine the thought" (1992: 10).

The *Reflexive* model, according to Burawoy is "a model of science that embraces not detachment but engagement as the road to knowledge. Premised upon our own participation in the world we study, reflexive science deploys multiple dialogues to reach explanations of empirical phenomena" (1998: 5). In the communities of Middle Eastern women upon which I focus, I place myself as a member in order to understand the

engagement of these communities, to critically explore the options that present themselves to these communities, and to evaluate the framework they use to advance their causes.

In my research, I paid attention to the effects of symbolic domination on the population I studied and on myself as well. My orienting decision to locate particular respondents and events was determined by: the field in which they were contesting; the habitus and the doxa they were either going by or revolting against; the lieu or place of the agents within the field; and, finally, the various forms of capital they held or lacked. Bourdieu's theoretical framework looks at "strategies and mechanisms of symbolic domination" (1992: 51). In his opinion, societies are differentiated entities made up of a set of intersecting, self-regulating fields. And within each field, hierarchical positions between the dominants and the dominated are continually contested. Thus, women's organizations negotiate rights and access in various social fields and levels. The fact that the differentiated society "is not a seamless totality integrated by systemic functions, a common culture, criss-crossing conflicts, or an overarching authority" (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 16-17) means that women's organizations have choices in adopting issues targeting specific instances of "authority", rather than framing each initiative as a struggle against the system in its totality. This, in turn, creates modular organizational strategies, in which local alliances can be formed around specific issues.

I was alert to the traps of imposing exogenous determinants of gender roles onto identifications constructed by Lebanese activists, whether these determinants derived

from international treaties or were simply dictated by hegemonic western attitudes. Symbolic domination and exogenous determinants were detected in positioning Lebanese women's stance on feminism and gender activism vis-à-vis Western discourses. Emerson, Fretz and Shaw (1995) underline the danger that acceding to preconceptions can result in ignoring, marginalizing, or obscuring indigenous understandings. They also point to the need to focus "not on members' decontextualized talk but on naturally occurring, situated interaction in which local meanings are created and sustained." For them, "writing ethnographic fieldnotes that are sensitive to member's meanings is primarily a matter not of asking but of inferring what people are concerned with from the specific ways in which they talk and act in a variety of natural settings" (Emerson et al. 1995: 140). Therefore, combining reflexive and feminist methodological approaches in my research lets women's voices, activism, and conception of rights come through in building up a broader picture of the social dynamic in which they have agency.

2. THE FEMINIST STANCE

The theme of reflexivity is carried into my understanding of the feminist stance as well. Ramazanoğlu and Holland (2002: 119) describe feminist reflexivity as "an invitation to other voices to challenge the researcher's knowledge claims and conceptions of power." In particular, I used this principle as a guide to avoid decontextualizing gender, a major methodological challenge to my project because given that different social expectations are constructed differently for men than women, my task was to capture those expectations on the most complex level while bringing them back to the real questions posed by Middle Eastern feminist activism.

As Williams (1991a: 233) explains, “gender differences are constructed by subjecting men and women to different social expectations and environments.” However, by “decontextualizing gender,” we understand that these expectations are not universal or normative, but they rather mean different things to different groups (Williams 1991a). Attitudes towards their expectations and environments vary tremendously according to personal, religious and cultural convictions. I maintain that one of the most serious challenges to understanding Middle Eastern feminism is to analyze the dynamism of these gender expectations: how and when they change, who and what changes them and where does the change occur. The Lebanese feminist movement is also a heterogeneous movement —or movements— that follow different logics and ordering principles. In this dissertation, I am careful not to project or assume at any point that the women’s rights activism whom I interviewed unconditionally represent all Lebanese women.

Finally, the feminist stance equips me as a researcher with a critical consciousness that is sensitive to the constraints and limits of my “knowledge, culture and experience,” and also my “personal skills, powers of empathy and political openness to silences and exclusions” (Ramazanoğlu and Holland 2002: 119). Despite the fact that activists shared a significant part of themselves with me, they still had untold painful memories, unfulfilled dreams and shattered hopes. I am fully aware that they held these in their hearts as they remembered conflicts in their own families and endless wars that brought them destruction and new challenges for reconstructing dreams, institutions and campaigns.

C. Sampling and Data Collection

This study approach applies the non-probability sampling methods in selecting cases. The unit of analysis I chose to study is (1) Lebanese women who were current or previous affiliates of Lebanese women's rights organizations; (2) Lebanese scholars who have taught and/or written on the subject of women's rights; and (3) Lebanese women politicians and public figures who have contributed to women's empowerment. I followed purposive and snowball sampling strategies. Purposive sampling is "intentionally [sampling] research participants for the specific perspectives they may have" (Esterberg 2002: 93). Hence, in the purposive sampling, I identified my initial group of respondents through the pilot study I conducted in August 2005 and the connections I made with the Lebanese-American University's (LAU) Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World and the American University of Beirut's (AUB) Social and Behavioral Program. Additional respondents were then selected using snowball sampling, where each person is asked to refer others who have made important contributions to women's rights. I found snowballing to be a highly effective strategy for gaining access to respondents, especially in taking me beyond an easy access grouping to those whom I considered a "special population" where access is relatively restrictive, like members of Hezbollah.

Using a mixed methods approach has many potential benefits, including increasing overall understanding of a phenomenon through triangulation, examining multiple aspects of a question, and using findings from one approach to guide the other (Esterberg 2002). In order to understand meanings, interactions and relations among my population

of informants in this study, and to legitimately extrapolate from my sample to larger sets, I utilized the toolkit of qualitative methods that seemed most appropriate, given that cultural immersion and observation were crucial to my goal of understanding the contextual framework of social and women's movements in traditional social structures. As Esterberg (2002), among others, rightly stresses, it is important not only to comprehend the individual subjective activist's experiences and the collective representations these flow into, but also their political environments and power relations.

The three data-collection qualitative methodologies that I utilize (interviews, participant observation and content analysis) helped explain the pathways through which women's rights activists achieve political recognition and citizenship rights and provided a comprehensive contextualization for understanding women's activism in Lebanon. For instance, interviews alone weren't sufficient to map the motivations of Hezbollah women's rights activists and the strategies that they followed. For that purpose, I obtained movement literature as well as analysis from extra-movement sources that analyzed Hezbollah approaches to gender relations.

The ***interviews*** served to gather detailed information about respondents' experiences as they got involved and committed themselves to serving an organization's mandate and agenda. I designed the interview questionnaire to acquire data first of all on the familial, religious, socioeconomic and educational backgrounds of activists, and secondly to capture their evaluation of the successes and pitfalls of their organizations. The second method, participant observation, enabled me to gain an understanding of political and

social processes, as well as their impact on women's political participation and public awareness of women's rights in Lebanon. I conducted informal observation of women's groups through interactions in public space, and formal observation at conferences, workshops and meetings. These research strategies were complemented by close content analysis of brochures, research articles, conference records, websites, and news releases, which enabled me to gather background information on organizations' missions, objectives, history and accomplishments.

D. Role as a Researcher, Access and Linguistic Competence

The following is a discussion of the practical tactics that enhanced my ability to maximize the efficiency of my data collection efforts. These tactics include preparing for my fieldwork during one of my earlier visits to Lebanon; identifying myself as an Arab-American, thus benefiting from framing my role as a researcher as both an insider and an outsider to the Lebanese culture; and finally, activat my various social and kinship networks to gain access to my respondents relatively quickly and easily.

1. PRE-FIELDWORK CONNECTIONS

Lebanon's flagship university, American University of Beirut (AUB), granted me valuable academic affiliation. I worked under the supervision of Professor Samir Khalaf, the director of the Department of Behavioral and Social Studies, who granted me access to the library and campus services as well as work space. In addition, while in Lebanon for twenty days in 2005, I established contact with and obtained support from several academic and activist institutions. I also obtained the written and oral support of

distinguished political and religious leaders. These initial contacts were very important in properly credentialing me for research among Lebanese women activists.

2. IDENTITY AS ARAB-AMERICAN

Although I am fluent in Arabic, French and English, there were a few challenges that I had to overcome in building trust with my respondents. First was my Syrian origin and Arabic accent. Some Lebanese are sensitive to conversing with Syrians on sensitive issues that could be deemed uncomfortable such as their feelings toward the fifteen years of Syrian occupation. When I felt that this issue might have evoked any sensitivity, I spoke English with my respondents. Second, since English was the sole language of my formal education and knowledge of sociological and political terms, I had to enrich my Arabic vocabulary through asking friendly scholars to explain technical terms. Sometimes I used the English word, and at other times I purposefully asked my respondents to define terms such as gender and feminism. The latter practice helped me to discover semantic patterns that enriched my theoretical conclusions.

Third, my identity as an Arab-American was something with which Lebanese were familiar and comfortable. Each summer, millions of Lebanese in the diaspora return to Lebanon to visit their families. Those “foreign” Lebanese, usually dress more casually than the locals and speak differently as well. They speak Arabic with a heavy accent that shows that they do not converse in Arabic on a daily basis. Additionally, many of the sentences they use are translated thoughts from their daily language. Ironically, to my

Lebanese respondents, I looked like an American, and spoke like one too; but I was not perceived as such by staff in the American Embassy during the evacuation.

To many Lebanese, I fit this hyphenated identity better than the stereotypical image of a Syrian. However, everybody laughed when I would describe myself as half-Syrian and half-Lebanese, referring to my mother's Lebanese origins and my father's Syrian origin. To them, individual identities are dictated through patrilineal filiations regardless of how an individual chooses to identify him/herself.

3. ACCESS AND NETWORKS

In my research, my role was a mixture of insider and outsider. According to Merton's (1972) doctrine of the Insider, no matter how careful and talented *outsiders* may be, they are still excluded from privileged access to certain forms of social and cultural knowledge. My position required not only an understanding of Lebanese women's struggle, but also understanding "what is most worth understanding" in their struggle (Merton 1972). I feel that explaining my role as a researcher is best done through presenting how this role switched between insider and outsider status based on the value of the access I was trying to gain.

As an outsider, I was forgiven for asking sensitive questions, such as whether or not all Lebanese Shiites identify with Hezbollah, and justifying them with my lack of familiarity with the Lebanese social contentions. In an interview with Psychology Professor Azzah Shrara Beydoun—a Shiite who is a founding member of the Lebanese Women

Researchers (Bahithat) group and an appointed member of the National Commission for Lebanese Women— I was able to discuss my ignorance of the Shiite community in Lebanon as follows:

> Stephan: I know that the Shiites here are divided either with Hezbollah or Berry (and Amal)
>
> Beydoun: No? Only? And what about us?
>
> Stephan: I don't know, what about you? You said it is a good thing that I am not from this country because I can make a statement.
>
> Beydoun: As if! We, we are liberals, we are secular, we are neither those nor the others. We are not believers. As if! Okay, I am Shiite, why wouldn't I be?
>
> Stephan: It is regarded as your personal, you were born and…
>
> Beydoun: I was born Shiite
>
> Stephan: This is the reductionist view of you
>
> Beydoun: I know I know I am classified as Shiite. When they survey us, they count me among the Shiite. I pass for both, but in the same time because I am Shiite they benefited from me. They have things they wanted to do.

Initially, activists labeled me as the researcher from the United States or from the *American University of Beirut* to indicate my objectivity and justify my unfamiliarity with their movement and culture. This status allowed my interviews to become more profound and detailed. Yet, my professionalism and affiliations were still not as useful in gaining me access to my respondents as were the recommendations I received from influential people.

I quickly realized that activists were reluctant to talk to me unless they felt a sense of trust. To gain trust and familiarity quickly, I was punctilious in going through the proper channels to secure proper introduction to my respondents. Towards the end of my stay, I was able to obtain my respondents' trust as an insider, and to convince them of the sincerity of my motives. By the time I established these initial connections, I was able to fit in as a "guest of honor" and eventually as "one of us." For instance, when I made my second attempt to interview the president of the *Lebanese Women Democratic Gathering*, who doubles as the coordinator of the *Lebanese Women Network*, she informed me that she was tired of wasting time talking to researchers. After repeated pleas and visits, she granted me an interview at a restaurant over beer and pizza. After this memorable lunch, she invited me as an observer to the *Lebanese Women Network* workshop and introduced me as "one of us" to representatives from the thirteen organizations.

A few times, I failed on my own to get through to my respondents. My list of eighty people featured some high profile politicians and public figures. I resorted to my extended kinship networks as a last resort in a few instances. For instance, after a month of trying and failing to interview Rabab as-Sadr, the sister of the most influential deceased Shiite leader, my relative called her son on my behalf. Within half an hour the interview was set for the following Saturday in Tyre (Sour - صور). Rabab, in turn, introduced me to a person in Hezbollah as "one of us," who granted me an interview within 48 hours. Additionally, my husband's family name was useful in tranquilizing the suspicions of a professor who was wary of my Syrian background. When she recognized

the name of my husband's cousin (the son of the sister of the mother of my husband), a doctor who saved her son's life twenty years ago, I immediately became a "one of us."

E. Data

While in Lebanon for two months, from May 11th until July 12th 2006, I conducted 33 interviews, one focus group, and five participant observations. Additionally, I collected over 75 books, reports and articles written by activists and women's rights organizations. Although the duration of my fieldwork is short, I worked very intensely and utilized every moment and opportunity.

After arriving in Beirut on Thursday, May 11th, I contacted the Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab States at the Lebanese American University the very next day and made an appointment to meet with the associate director and two other key staff for the following Monday, May 14th. They had been expecting me after the arrangements I made with them in 2005 and the emails I sent them before my travel. The staff provided me with a list of activists who had attended its most recent roundtable workshop. From this basic list, I generated my snowball sample. In identifying and operationalizing the Lebanese activists' network, I applied a realist (rather than a nominalist) strategy (Laumann et al. 1983). By using the *realist* approach "the network analyst adopts the presumed subjective perceptions of system actors themselves, defining the boundaries of a social entity as the limits that are consciously experienced by all or most of the actors that are members of the entity." Whereas in the *nominalist* approach "network closure is imposed by the researcher's conceptual framework that serves an analytic purpose"

(Knoke and Kuklinski 1982: 12). My decision was governed by my concern that tracing the self-identities of my unit of analysis within the multiple cultural fields, in which they operated, required giving heed to the open endedness of structures as my informants saw them rather than making judgments about the objective reality of those structures from the outside, as would be consistent with the nominalist approach.

Before leaving for Lebanon, I had already mapped out many contacts. For instance, I had obtained a letter of support from my advisor, who sent it personally to Professor Samir Khalaf, the director of the Center for Social and Behavioral Studies at the American University of Beirut (AUB). I met with Professor Khalaf on Wednesday May 14th to establish my official affiliation as a research fellow of the Center. At AUB, a Syrian professor introduced me, as his fellow Syrian citizen, to his colleague who became one of my very important respondents, Shiite Professor Fahmieh Charafeddine. Through her, I obtained access to Beydoun in the *National Committee for the Follow Up of Women's Issues* as well as Maronite Professor Marguerite Helou.

Also prior to going to Lebanon, Professor Gretchen Ritter had forwarded an email to me about Lebanese Emigration Research Center at Notre Dame University, and, after contacting the center before my departure to Lebanon, I proceeded to contact them immediately upon my arrival there. I visited the center on Tuesday May 13th and established a research fellow status with them as well. This center was extremely helpful in setting up an interview with Former Maronite Deputy Nuhad Suaid and Parliamentary

Member Strida Geagea (although I did not interview her due to the war); and provided me with trustworthy assistants to help me transcribe my data.

While visiting the local Lebanese-American community in Austin, my House representative to the Texas Legislature, Representative Mark Strama, who is also a Lebanese-American, suggested that I contact one of his friends who had done an internship with the *National Democratic Institute* in Beirut. I immediately contacted Representative Strama's friend who put me in touch with the Institute and I met with NDI's key officials on May 19th. They were my point of introduction to the *Lebanese Women Network* and several members of its thirteen organizations.

I conducted my first two interviews on the 2nd of June. I then conducted two to three interviews per day, and sometimes even four, except for weekends, until July, when war broke out. Additionally, I managed to attend academic and press conferences as well as an evaluation workshop and a local production of the *Vagina Monologue*. I visited the United Nations' offices to obtain data and I visited with such influential individuals in Lebanon's social politics as the widow of the late Minister of Economics, with whom I discussed family custody issues.

1. INTERVIEWS

I conducted thirty-three (33) in-depth semi-structured interviews and obtained the verbal and written consent of all my respondents. Each interview lasted an average of 2 hours with some going over 3 hours. They were conducted either at the respondents' work

place, residence or a café. I also designed a short interview for politicians with my questions tailored accordingly, since they usually had limited time, and I had limited access. In building a camaraderie relationship with my respondents, as I hoped to do before going into the field, I had to share a lot of information pertaining to my family background and personal life. For example, in an interview with Ms. Nora Jumblat—a Sunni Syrian national who participated in the organizing the Cedar Revolution of 2005 and is married to a Lebanese Druze leader—the following conversation took place in the context of the interview:

Stephan: My father is Syrian

Jumblat: Oh okay, where from?

Stephan: Damascus

Jumblat: Ah, this is where I lived. What عيلة (aila) family?

Stephan: Not Istfan, Homsieh

Jumblat: Ah, Homsieh, of course, that means you're probably originally from Homs.

Stephan: I don't know, but my aunt tells stories that we are originally Lebanese and so forth. So do you feel that you had the preparation…?

Jumblat: Stephan, so you related to the Stephan, there is the Istfan family. They are very famous in Damascus, they have all the Brokar.

Stephan: No but they are friends with my family. But this is not the same family. Stephan is Lebanese, we are actually related to Basil Fuleihan.

Jumblat: Oh my he rest in peace الله يرحمه

Stephan: On his…

Jumblat: On his mother's side…

Stephan: and his wife is my husband's second cousin.

Jumblat: Oh okay.

Stephan: Musallam.

Jumblat: Oh Musallam okay.

Stephan: It's a small country. By the way, I am a relative of Maggy Teen at the Embassy.

Jumblat: Oh yeah!

Stephan: It's again a small country. On my mother's side because she's Lebanese. Yes. So do you feel that your life in your family prepared for such a big task, such a big life?

I conducted 12 interviews in English and 19 in Arabic mostly with Lebanese women's rights activists. Interviews that were conducted in English were transcribed without any editing. These comprise interviews with Lina Abou Habib, Princess Hayat Arslan, Amal Dibo, Marguerite Helou, Nora Jumblat, Jean Said Makdisi, Fadi Moghaizel, Rasha Momeh, Anita Nassar, Lamia Rustum Shehadeh, Maysam Hajj Balan and Reverand Habib Badr. Twenty-nine (29) of the interviews were with women and two were with men: The first man is the son of the late Maronite activist Laure Moghaizel and the other one is a Pastor at the Evangelical Church in Lebanon. Among my key interviews is one with Rima Fakhry, a member of the highest political council of Hezbollah in the Dahiyeh (the southern suburb of Beirut that received the heaviest bombing in the July war). Ms.

Fakhry had been the director of the women's rights section at Hezbollah before being invited to join the political council.

I also interviewed a former parliamentarian member and a former minister, the wife of the most distinguished political leader for the Druze faith and visited with the wife of a deceased parliamentarian member and minister. I was scheduled to interview the Minister of Social Affairs, Nayla Moawad, but my plan was disrupted because of the war. However, I captured her speech at an event at Notre Dame University in early May and I interviewed her in October 2007, when my relative in Houston (the daughter of the son of the brother of the mother of my husband) invited me to attend a fundraising gala she was co-organizing, which PM Moawad attended, to benefit the René Moawad Foundation. The war prevented me from interviewing the only female general in the Lebanese Army.

Of the interviews I conducted 17 were with activists, 8 with public figures, and 7 with scholars. Nineteen (19) of my respondents were married while 5 were single (including one lesbian), and 7 had nontraditional marital arrangements (including being married to a man from another religion, living away from the husband, living with a partner without being married, and one divorcee). The majority of my respondents were over 50 years old (18 of them) while 11 were in their forties and 3 were in their thirties or late twenties. Interestingly, religious diversity was fairly represented. I interviewed seven Sunnis, seven Shiites, and seven Maronites (the three major sects in Lebanon). I also interviewed two Catholics, two Druze, five Orthodox and one Protestant. In three instances, I was unable to complete the interviews I started before the war. However, I have overcome this hurdle

by contacting my respondents and receiving their publications from Lebanon thanks to email, friends and relatives.

2. PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION

While in Lebanon in August 2005, I attended and taped a press conference held by the Lebanese Women Council on "Lebanese Women Struggle for Equal Citizenship Rights." I also conducted and recorded two observations of press conferences of the Lebanese Council of Women and one of their general assembly meetings in 2006. During one of the conferences, I established contact with Deputy Ghunwa Jalloul, who agreed to grant me an interview. I was invited as an outside observer to a one day evaluation workshop of the Lebanese Women Network, and I conducted a focus group of the Women's Rights Students' Club at the American University of Beirut. Both of these events are also on tape. I attended the launching of the NGO Studies Conference at Notre Dame University, where both the President of the Lebanese Women's Council and Deputy Nayla Moawad gave presentations. I also went to a meeting at the National Evangelical Church's Helping Hand Women Society where I met the Protestant Parliamentarian Member (who represents my family). Finally, I recorded an interview on a local TV channel with women politicians.

3. CONTENT ANALYSIS

I collected over 75 books, reports, and writings of my respondents. I am attaching a list of these materials as an appendix. These printed materials contain explanations, defenses, and mission statements covering the history, positions, and accomplishments of activists and organizations. I used these texts as the basis for a content analysis of the public face

shown by the organizations and activists, something that is not possible to understand through interviews alone. I also consulted studies conducted by local research institutes and centers in Lebanon that are not available in the United States.

F. Data Processing: Transcription, Translation and Analysis

Most of the interviews were digitally recorded; only two were not, due to technical difficulties. In these two cases, I took dense notes and reconstructed the interviews immediately afterward. Before conducting the interview, I used the "informed consent" form to reassure my respondents that their names would only be mentioned if they allowed me to do so. I had initially requested an exemption from the Internal Review Board not to obtain signatures on the informed consent form. While that strategy was wise and contributed to building further trust between the respondents and me, I was surprised to see my respondents' openness to my mentioning of their names in the study. Although many of these women were public figure, I detected that they felt a sense of ownership and pride of their accomplishment and positions on issues. Some of them insisted that I do indeed attribute their quotes to them by name. In my interview with Dr. Ugarit Younan, a Maronite who is one of the leaders of the Movement for People's Rights, her response to my willingness to protect her confidentiality was:

> You are interviewing me. I don't have a problem with using my name. I prefer that you say my name. When you send me the papers later, if I have a problem, this is a study, when I see it I will tell you to add something or remove another. If I had a problem with the interview, I would not have done it. That is, I would not do the interview without mentioning my name. On the contrary, that's it. It is one

decision and this way, you mention my name because it is more appropriate to do so.

I completed the transcription after I returned to the United States. Within six month after returning from the field, I transcribed all of the English interviews and the focus group, which had been conducted in English. The other interviews and observations were transcribed in their original language with the help of two research assistants. One assistant was an affiliate with the American University of Beirut and the other with the Notre Dame University. Both assistants signed a contract abiding by the confidentiality guidelines which I provided. The interviews transcribed by the assistant from AUB were then stored on a password secured webspace to which she and I only had access. The interviews transcribed at Notre Dame were safely stored using a controlled blackboard page. Additionally, I reviewed each transcribed interview to ensure its accuracy. Listening to the interviews and reading the transcribed words proved beneficial in my analysis of their contents.

My translation into English of important quotes was oriented towards capturing the meaning of the idea rather than literal translation. However, I sought to strike a balance between the readers' comprehension and the integrity of the interviews. I applied "cultural translation" (Clifford and Marcus 1986), where I attempted not only to translate the words of my respondents into English, but also to transpose their experiences, environments and cultures. It is noteworthy that translation was a major task in this work as my fluency in Arabic is limited to the daily conversation terminologies. I had to learn

not only the translation of terms such as empowerment or workshops but also the most appropriate synonym to use in my respondents' scholarly and professional circles.

In addition to my recorded and published data, I relied on the notes and thoughts that I jotted down either in my journal, in which I wrote daily, or in my notepad, which I took with me to each interview. I used rich descriptions in my field notes to convey my findings and I kept notes that clarified my feelings and thoughts after each observation/interview (Emerson et al. 1995; Esterberg 2002). I recorded occurrences of positive as well as negative activities in my observations, taking into account my preconceived ideas and assumptions. I also expanded points of contact with my respondents and communicated in the language that they were most comfortable using.

Although my analysis of data was ongoing, I see it as falling into four distinctive stages. Through all four of these stages, I mostly used inductive reasoning and open coding. Prior to going into the field, I started out with a research question and a specified direction for my research. My interest centered on two main themes and their links: women's activism and kinship. Although these two concepts were the focus of my study, I broadened my analysis and used open coding as "a way of opening up avenues of inquiry" because I wanted to "discover" theory as it emerged in my fieldnotes and other data (Emerson et al. 1995: 143). I did so by asking theoretically relevant questions about the dimensions and conditions of women's struggle for rights and recognition within the kinship structure. The consequences of this relation as it developed in my notes informed my orienting questions, such as who, when, what, how and why.

The first stage of analysis took place while I did my fieldwork in Lebanon. I proceeded inductively by "writing fieldnotes that reflect the significance of events and experience to those in the setting" (Emerson et al. 1995: 151). Either during or after the interviews or the observation, I jotted down notes. Sometimes in my casual conversation with colleagues and other people, I was given some insight or some information about my subjects, so I also took quick notes to capture my thoughts at that moment. As soon as I got an opportunity to add some depth to these quick notes, I did so immediately, whether while waiting for another respondent or riding the taxi to the next interview or sitting in my office at AUB or in my residence. I used my conversations with others to deepen my interpretative ability by not totally relying on interviews and observations. These conversations enabled me to learn more about my respondents' kinship structures and social environments.

Second, while transcribing the interviews or listening to those transcribed by my two assistants, I kept a file of notes. In these notes, I documented reoccurring themes and categories that were prevalent in several interviews or new ideas that were noteworthy. In reading the interviews, along with my notes, I wrote notes and made reference to a particular quote or passage.

The third stage of my data analysis was looking at the large picture. This stage was challenging because my data varied widely on many levels. I decided to sort the activists into two major categories: those who use the kinship system and those who do not.

Strauss and Corbin (1998: 113) stress that “Grouping concepts into categories is important because it enables the analyst to reduce the number of units with which he or she is working.” By allocating the data into its appropriate slot using my categories, the larger picture became clearer in relationship to my research problem and my theory. I used ATLAS.ti qualitative software to organize and evaluate the textual data and interviews by identifying common patterns, themes, and concepts. First, I read all the interviews one additional time. In this reading, I identified important quotes and immediately labeled them according to whatever key concepts I saw applicable, which meant many of them were labeled multiple times. This in itself suggested patterns relating to my central categories.

All throughout my research, I try to specify concepts and their relationships to theory and data. I labeled the reoccurring phenomena with concepts that are familiar in the field such as: network, autonomy, kin groups, etc. While reading the interview transcripts I wrote down additional memos to record my assessment of the situation that was captured in the interviews. After reading all the interviews, I read the quotes I had previously identified and organized the labels under groups and subgroups which were to be later transformed into codes. I used the memos that I wrote at this stage to provide description matching each category and code. These notes also served to chart my thought process going through my note taking from the field compared to during transcription. Using my notes, I was able to engage in deep and more meaningful exchange with the opinions and attitudes expressed by my respondents during their interviews. Thus, the third stage is a kind of dialogue between my thoughts as a researcher and the quotes I extracted from the

interviews to represent the activists. Through writing notes, identifying emerging concepts and patterns and grouping them, I applied open coding analysis that scanned entire documents, but also focused on specific words and sentences to compare the experiences of those who did utilize the kinship system versus those who did not.

The final stage of my analysis was the refinement process that occurred during the writing of my dissertation. At this stage, I was able to see yet a bigger picture still that encompassed all my thoughts on paper and the quotes that I chose to include in a grand pattern. As I wrote and revised each chapter, and reread the transcripts again, I dug deeper into my findings and was able to better evaluate my preconceived biases and make sure that they did not impinge upon the meanings of the respondents in my base of quotes.

Richardson (1990) describes ethnography as a "narrating" act, one which, according to Emerson et al., involves the translation of concepts, telling structured stories that are tied to one or more themes or claims, and textualizing field material, which, from another point of view, is transforming respondents' experience itself into text. Geertz (1973) refers to this process as "a negotiation" between researchers and the respondents. I tried to narrate, contextualize and transform the stories of Lebanese women's rights activists using their own words and descriptions as they occurred in my interviews. However I also brought this oral material into relationship with what I noted in my fieldnotes, my observation and my analysis. The crux of these negotiating processes, for me, was considering my respondents' perceptions and meanings while maintaining my role as a

researcher and whatever distance the latter required in order to be able to analyze their stories and experiences in light of my research question. Objectivity, in reflexivity is "not measured by procedures that assure an accurate mapping of the world but by the growth of knowledge; that is, the imaginative and parsimonious reconstruction of theory to accommodate anomalies"(Burawoy 1998: 5). Adhering to this principle of objectivity-as-growth-of-knowledge was a process that was developed and reconstructed at each of the four stages of analysis.

G. Limitations and Challenges

1. RESEARCH LIMITATIONS

My aim was to gather a range of experiences from women who were activists in women's rights organization, political women, and scholars. Within my resource constraints I was able to explore the ways that women's right activists benefited from their nuclear family and extended kinship networks. However, there are limitations to this study and they include, in addition to language fluency which I discussed earlier, my bias in my perspective on research and in selecting the sample; the small sample size and the interruption of my research due to war.

Emerson et al. caution that "No field research can be a completely neutral, detached observer, outside and independent of the observed phenomena" (1995: 3) while Bourdieu warns against reductionist objectivism that distorts the reality of the relationship. To make my own stance transparent, in this study I identified my position as a researcher in

the beginning of each interview and I took into consideration my subjective biases while doing the analysis.

This research uses the judgment sampling approach (Fox 1998) that is based on certain judgments and selections of certain characteristic of the population under study. This approach is subject to many challenges including, a) the selection of a non-random initial sample; b) the manner in which chain-referrals take place, which is influenced by volunteerism; c) homophily bias, which may arise in selecting members that possess similar backgrounds; and finally, d) referral through network links, which may lead to overrepresenting members of organized institutions that have large personal networks (Heckathorn 2002: 12-3). Throughout my fieldwork, I avoided these limitations as much as I could by diversifying my pool of informants. Although I followed my informants' lead in many instances, I still mapped out social networks and alliances to give voice to underrepresented members such as religious groups or radical activists.

Limits intervene on the size of the sample and my data collection methods, for which I have compensated with the density of my data. In regards to the size of my sample, my initial intention was to interview 65 women. I believe that the total population of women who are politically active on the national level would not exceed 100 members. Although the list started at around 25, the snowball kept getting bigger through recommendation I received from people in the field. Had I stayed that extra month in Lebanon, maybe I would have conducted all the interviews I wanted to do. But would having these additional interviews have significantly changed my theory and my perceptions? Is my

data sufficient to reach the conclusions that I did? The richness and density of the data that I obtained during my field research in Lebanon allowed me to study the Lebanese case in greater detail. Although I initially thought that the majority of my analysis would focus on data obtained from interviews, I later realized that there are additional approaches to understanding the complexity of women's activism in Lebanon. Therefore, the documents that I obtained from various sources, and which I discuss at length later, provide a comprehensive contextualization for understanding women's activism in Lebanon.

2. ESCAPING THE WAR

It is impossible to discuss my research in Lebanon that summer without mentioning how the war cut short my project, forcing me to escape with my two children: Rony (four and a half years old), and Karla (two years old). My original plan was to conduct field research in Lebanon between May 11th and August 10th, 2006. I had planned for this trip for a year, making all proper arrangements to enroll my children in summer camps and enrich their life with the emersion in a multicultural setting. However, due to the war that broke out between Hezbollah and Israel, I was forced to evacuate on July 15th, 2006, leaving some of my research incomplete. Yet, I made arrangements to obtain the documents I left behind through friends and family who continue to travel to Lebanon.

On the eve of Thursday the 13th of July 2006, my son went to bed excited about the next day's promised excursion to Splash Mountain Water Park outside Beirut in Lebanon. That excursion never happened. Instead, my children and I were awoken by a panic-filled

phone call from my husband in the United States. The war in Lebanon had broken out and my children and I, along with thousands of Americans and four million Lebanese, were trapped in war-torn Lebanon.[8]

It took a week for the American government to make up its mind and to begin the process of evacuating its citizens. Specifically, the evacuation started on July 17th. Between the start of the war and the beginning of the evacuation, then, at least 25,000 American citizens in Lebanon were subject to the hazards of war, which included the bombing of Beirut, the bombing of all bridges in the country, and warfare between Hezbollah and Israel's troops in the south of the country. Given that week and the uncertainty that the American government would act quickly to evacuate its citizens from Lebanon, I opted not to wait, but to find my own route out of Lebanon.

I panicked as I listened to the sound of Israeli fighter jets fly over my head, only to be followed in less than ten second by loud explosions that shook the house. The long silence that followed the bombing was even scarier because of the uncertainty and calamity enfolded in it. The kids were crying; the maids were scared; and the American Embassy's phone was always busy. I did not know what to do as I had never been in a war before, nor did I know what the shooting was about except from what I had seen on

[8] While Israeli citizens did feel the impact of the Hezbollah attacks on them, the feeling of entrapment was not present because the Israeli infrastructure remained intact and the Hezbollah attacks were not as destructive.

television. My entire family immigrated to the United States in 1990 from Syria, when I was 17. I had no direct experience of the events in Lebanon in the 1980s.

Having gone through the scare of Hurricane Rita in 2005, I knew that I had to stock non-perishable food supplies and cash while ensuring the safety of my children and minimizing the impact of the war on them. After living through the heavy bombing on Friday, July 14th, 2006, I knew in my heart that I could not spend another night in Lebanon, and I did not. I also knew that I did not want to leave without my research or my children's favorite items and I did not.

The decision to flee Lebanon after less than two days of the war was the most difficult decision I have made in my life. How could I calculate the risks of staying or escaping with absolutely no frame of reference and no refuge? Many Lebanese told me that these war activities would subside in forty-eight hours. Those were the longest forty-eight hours of my life. I escaped with my two children and 300 pounds of books, toys and clothes at the crack of dawn that Saturday. The four-hour trip I made to my aunt's house in Damascus, Syria was dangerous even by Lebanese standards, as we were intermittently under heavy attack. I still felt it was wiser than staying in Beirut's safest and most affluent neighborhood and waiting to be rescued.

But on July 12th 2006, I was unaware that my life had changed forever. Previously, I used to call myself a "part-time mom," but in the evacuation I became very close to my children, whom I felt grew up suddenly. After the evacuation, my love and attachment to

them grew in a very special way, I was their savior... After the war, I had to help my children overcome their post-traumatic stress syndrome. They became aggressive and afraid of every loud noise. A part of their childhood was lost with their inability to sleep, hardship in digesting their food, and flashes of panic. Unable to explain my own bouts of tears, my sudden overprotection of my children, or my newly acquired fear of planes and airports, I tried to normalize my life and theirs in the United States as much as possible but not without remembering that we were once refugees.

My escape was accompanied by a profound feeling of helplessness and victimization. I had a mixed feeling about Lebanon and the war and a perplexed stance on the meanings of social justice and human rights. Eventually, I went back to my research and started contacting my respondents again. Their optimism and gratitude gave me the courage to resume the role of a researcher. Their experiences have enriched me personally and intellectually: I learned hope from women whose lives have been shattered by war and I discovered new, resilient aspects of democracy and social justice.

H. Conclusion

This chapter represents my efforts to make my research "A sociology that seeks to bring sociology to publics beyond the academy, promoting dialogue about issues that affect the fate of society, placing the values to which we adhere under the microscope" (Burawoy et al. 2004: 104). I have discussed sampling strategies in selecting respondents in a population that was relatively closed to strangers. Thus, I stressed the importance of my role as an inside researcher when cultural sympathy was needed and an outsider when

distances and objectivity came in handy. I also explained how I complemented the interviews with participant observation and content analysis, thus using this mixed methodological approach to enrich the data and give a clearer picture of the stories and contexts of women's rights activists in Lebanon. In my analysis of the data, I engaged in a negotiation between the narratives of Lebanese feminists and my research focus and inference. Finally, I outlined some of the limitations of this research that were under my control (such as objectivity) and those that were far outside my control, like political events. This study stands as a living example that researchers who pursue research opportunities outside their national boundaries risk their safety and sometimes their lives, but also reap tremendous intellectual benefits.

CHAPTER THREE: KINSHIP: AN EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION

A. Introduction

So far in my dissertation, I have been making a case against the assumption that the logic of social movements requires, as a condition, actors' autonomy from traditional social structure, or that any and all progressive social movements should necessarily strive for that goal. I have thus laid the groundwork for a broader sense of social movements and, in particular, shown how it is theoretically possible for feminist movements to be embodied within a familialist framework. My next task will be to map out a particular set of family relationships in a culture that does not have an endogenous equivalent of the individualist ideals found in certain modern Western societies. Specifically, in this chapter, I explain the conditions under which social capital is acquired from membership in kinship structures and networks in Lebanon.

Middle Eastern scholars (See for example Afkhami 1995; Charrad 2001; Hoodfar 1997; Joseph 1996; Kandiyoti 1991; and Moghadam 1996) have pointed out that kin groups are important social and political actors, although not always empowering of women. Joseph (2000) suggests that kinship has contributed to disenfranchising women through its complex and paradoxical "care/control" paradigm that is sustained by the state and religious sects. In the same vein, Charrad's observation of the family restrictions in the Middle East and North Africa rings also true in Lebanon where "The society where lineages historically have played a greater political role and where patrilineality occupies a more prominent place in the law is the one where women have more limited citizenship

rights" (Charrad 2000: 86).

In the modern and postmodern worlds, some social scientists claim that the impact of kinship in the public sphere is either annihilated or subordinated to sources of social capital generated by the individual outside of the family context (See for example Putnam et al. 1993; Turner 1990). As a matter of inconvenient fact, however, kin groups still exist and even flourish as social and political actors, especially in the Middle East and the Islamic world. In the Middle East and North Africa, Charrad posits that "Family is the space where people negotiate the tension of identity, what it means to be part of a new world, and what it means to retain a sense of what is known" (Charrad 2007a: 59). My observations of the harmonized coexistence between activists and their kin groups led me to investigate the anatomy of Lebanese kinship.

To answer the question of how Lebanese women's rights activists use their kin groups to advance their pursuit of citizenship rights and political recognition, this chapter describes the different aspects of the kinship structure in Lebanon as I was able to derive it from the perspective of my respondents, to which I have added my own analysis in relation to the literature and my field observations.

In this chapter I argue that family relations in Lebanon are highly differentiated by community origin and social status. In presenting a Middle Eastern approach to understanding kinship, I classify membership in a kin group according to positions and relationships with other family members as they exist in Lebanon. In laying bare the logic

of kinship membership as a new typology, I am able to explain not only primary, secondary, and tertiary, but also symbolic kin membership. I then examine how social capital is constructed within the context of urbanization, class and religion. None of these social systems can be analyzed in isolation of the others, especially in Lebanon. In this section I develop two typologies that further our understanding of kinship. Community origin denotes the category by which Lebanese sort their community affiliation, with members classified as coming from the city, the village, tribal communities or poor suburbs. As I will show, family relationships and networks, mediated by the community of origin, are highly relevant to the women's rights movement. The second category is the social stratification per class among the elites, the intellectual and middle class and the working class. The social class of the family is also a significant determinant of women's rights and opportunities. After these typologies, the second section of this chapter offers an analysis of the responsibilities which women fulfill towards their kin groups and the rights which they are guaranteed in exchange. Women's caregiving responsibilities as daughters, wives and especially as mothers are dynamic yet restrictive, while the most significant opportunity that women receive from their family in return for their services is education.

B. Defining Kinship

In this section I outline the development of western perception of kinship as a concept, by examining relevant sociological, anthropological and legal literature. I then offer a typology of family relations in Lebanon that highlights the linguistic terms that my respondents used to refer to their family. Using empirical findings, I move away from

viewing the family membership primarily under the aspect of primary, secondary and tertiary family, or as it is presented by the classic nuclear versus extended family dichotomy in the West, to explain the complexity and the extensiveness of family relations in the Middle East.

Sociologists and anthropologists have disagreed in their approaches to developing a unified definition of kinship that is equally applicable to postmodern western societies as well as primordial, nonwestern cultures. It is fair to say that the modern study of kinship begins, however, before these disciplines had become so divided in their methods and objects. Robin Fox, an anthropologist, claims that the pre-eminence of lawyers in the first scientific studies of kinship— as, for instance, by Sir Henry James Summer Maine (1861)—is explained by their interest in determining matters relevant to inheritance, succession and marriage (Fox 1983: 16). Dealing with laws that were originally based on Roman law, many, including Sir Maine, sought to gain a grasp of that law by understanding Roman kinship patterns. He sought to impose a whole new set of laws on subject peoples in the colonies and in so doing confronted local arrangements of property that referenced kinship patterns.

Family law, being employed as one of the state's instruments to achieve hegemony within a given society, became important to study what people do in regards to mating, gestation, parenthood, socialization, sibling-ship and their ability to manipulate these relationships to their advantage (Fox 1983: 30). According to Fox (1983), in America it was a businessman, Lewis Henry Morgan, rather than a lawyer, who originally

contributed to developing kinship studies, as he conducted a life-long study on how Iroquois tribes in New York named their kin.

Thus, the study of kinship was not a value neutral activity undertaken for the sake of science alone, but was fundamental to the practices of governance that arose during the process of modernization in the nineteenth century, including the creation of a set of legal structures to regulate economic activity. As Fox points out, this activity took place in an environment in which the notion of social evolution was dominant. But the awareness of historical change, which allowed these earlier thinkers to see kinship in dynamic terms, was undermined by certain assumptions about evolution. Fox posits that early thinkers failed to realize "that kinship systems are not subject to cumulative evolution in the way that, say, technology is. Kinship systems, unlike technological inventions, cannot be ranked as better or worse, higher or lower; they simply represent alternative ways of doing things." (1983: 18).

Frederic Le Play's typology of families in his book, *The European Working Classes*, offers three types of families: Patriarchal, unstable and stem (Nisbet 1993). The first type represents a family that exists mostly in rural settings in which order theoretically depended on a dominant father figure. Although appropriate for pastoral conditions, Le Play found this lifestyle to be inappropriate to the modern political and economic order. The second type, the unstable family type (*la famille instable*), was described by Le Play as a transitional type – although obviously Le Play's own patriarchal ideology comes into play here, as this type, which displaces the order produced by the strong father, is

presented as something degenerate. The unstable family suffers from extreme individualism, its contractual nature, and its lack of roots in property. The third and most resourceful type of family in Le Play's opinion is the stem family (*la famille souche*), in which the children are free to leave the family home and to "found 'branch' families of their own. But whoever remains at home becomes the full heir; the family property is preserved intact and is represented legally by him alone. The stem family is always there to return to for those who need its security, but the system encourages personal autonomy and the development of new households, new enterprises, and new forms of property" (Nisbet 1993: 63-64).

In the new, industrialized and modern world, studying the sociology of the family was oriented, for much of the 20th century, to the idea that the primary determinant of identity in American life was achievement on the individual level, not ascription to some group. Tamara Hareven observes, in her *Family Time and Industrial Time* (1982), that this tendency, which was prevalent throughout the Anglosphere, emerged in tandem with the rise and domination of industrialization. According to Hareven, American sociologists have adopted two approaches in asserting that industrialization produced stresses that broke down the extended family. Followers of the Chicago School of Sociology attributed the disintegration of the family unit to migration to urban centers; while structural sociologists like Parsons (1955) argued that it was not displacement so much as the fact that certain features of the industrial system were more compatible with the isolated nuclear family. However, it was generally agreed that the traditional three-generational extended family was fragmented (1982: 1).

Under the framework of these assumptions about the impact of modernization, Parsons follows a comparative structural perspective and considers kinship "as a highly useful approach to the study of the functioning social structure" rather than addressing "problems of individual adjustment" (Parsons 1943: 22-24). Parsons took great pains to create a typology of relations among kin members according to the ego's family of orientation, family of procreation, first degree ascendant families, first degree collateral families, first descendant families, in-law family, second degree ascendant and descendant families, and second degree collateral families (1943: 23).

From their beginnings, then, we can see that these studies reflected their western social environments in as much as they assumed a framework that privileged the autonomy of the individual over their kin groups. This scholarship is best summarized in Schneider's (1980: vii) claim that "The kinship systems of modern, western societies are relatively highly differentiated as compared with the kinship systems found in many primitive and peasant societies." Even though the latter part of this claim is of questionable validity in the post-colonial countries, especially with the advent of more and more penetrative global processes (from the media to corporate culture) that define and redefine social, political and economic relations, the purpose of this chapter is to show that the kinship relations under review are more complex than could be defined in dichotomous terms.

The term kinship does not have an equivalent in Arabic. Linguistically speaking, understanding the different ways in which kin terms are utilized is important to

understanding the significance of kinship. In Arabic, the closest term to define kinship is *qaraba* (قرابة – relativity); yet the French term parenté (parent-ship in French) (Lévi-Strauss 1969) is closer to the term that is actually used in Lebanon for extended family, *Ahl* (أهل). This is the type of relationship that extends symbolically from the natal family to all of those to whom the individual is related by blood. The boundaries that distinguish the nuclear family from the extended one are blurry, subjective and vary by cultural and social context. In Arabic, scholars (Barakat 1993; Charrad 2001) have agreed that the proper term to describe the nuclear family is *usra* (أسرة) and the extend family is *A'ila* (عائلة). However, none of my respondents used these terms in this way. Instead, many of them referred to their spouse and children as (*A'ila* – عائلة), whereas they called their "extended family" *Ahl* (أهل), the equivalent to the English slang term, 'folks'. The technical root of the word for *usra* is the verb *Asara*, meaning imprison, bind, captivate, or enthrall. Here a linguist colleague recommended that I mention the fact that this is merely a "technical root" to indicate that the root of the word branches out to mean different things beyond the root word meaning. Likewise, *A'ila* comes from the root *'Aal* which means support or provide, whereas *Ahl* derives from *Ahala*, which means populate, inhabit or domesticate. Reference to the larger kin groups includes blood relatives (*Aqreba'* أقرباء) —who are also called "cousins"—as well as relative by marriage (*Nasab* - نسب). But the term *Nasab* also means descent and lineage. Terms like heritage are used to indicate cultural wealth (*Turath* - تراث), and the term ancestry is translated as origin (*Asel* - أصل). In everyday speech, instead of those English language lexemes, people refer to their familial heritage as grandparents (*Ajdadi* - أجدادي).

The following builds on the kinship definitions and typologies that have been created by western scholars, and extends and revises definitions and typologies that have been offered by Middle Eastern scholars. My goal is to provide a framework of membership and relationships between kin members that permits us to understand the praxis of kin membership inclusion, after which we can better understand the costs and benefits of such membership.

1. MEMBERSHIP

Inspired by Parsons' attempt to devise a kinship membership typology, I built upon Davies' (1949) kinship classifications in Syrian Arabic to devise categories that apply to categorizing family in the Lebanese context. According to the patterns that are found in my study, the strongest determinant of family identification is the individual's generational position.[9] The linguistic terms listed below emphasize the density of the degrees of connection of family relations (which are determined by a multitude of variables besides generational position, such as gender and community origin, as we shall see). Linguistically, I find the capacity of family terminology to cover extensive relationships intriguing in the light of the fact that Lebanese society lacks one word to describe privacy, a concept that played a pivotal role in the development of English individualism. I sort the categories below according to four levels of relationships that can be viewed as five concentric circles: Nuclear, natal, marital, extended and symbolic.

[9] Several of these categories are adopted from those introduced by Davies (1949).

a. Nuclear Family

The nuclear family in Lebanon is conceptualized differently than the models proposed for Western families. Nor does it reflect what Le Play termed as the unstable family, although nuclear families are supposed to be small and isolated. The nuclear family in Lebanon is extended, close to what Gary Lee, in his *Family Structure and Interaction*, called: the stem-nuclear family (Lee 1982: 109); yet it is also patriarchal, as the core of all the relations described below is the father, or the patriarch. The table below shows the immediate family, which is comprised of the couple, their children and their children's spouses, their grandchildren. Here, I use the term *Aila* (or *Usra*) to refer to the individuals and their two generations of descendents. Not only are these generations the most immediate in terms of eligibility for inheritance but also in terms of the care-giving duties they provide.

Table 1: *Aila* – عائلة – Family

Zawji	my husband
Marti, Madaamti	my wife
Ibni	my son
Binti	my daughter
Wlaadi	my children, my sons
Banati	my daughters
Kennti, mart ibni	my son's wife
Sihri, Zawj binti	my daughter's husband
Ibn ibni	my son's son
Ibn binti	my daughter's son
Bint ibni	my son's daughter
Bint binti	my daughter's daughter
Wlaad wlaadi, ahfadi	my grandchildren

b. Natal Kin

The term *beit* means literarily house and figuratively family in Lebanon. Often individuals refer to *beit ahli* as my parents' house or just family. This term extends beyond the parents per se to include all members of the natal family. Here, we see that my classification of natal kin applies more closely to what Le Play's stem family. Although degrees of closeness vary among those who are considered in the *beit ahl* category, these are the individual's kin to whom all members owe their first loyalty and love after the immediate family. The words of Maronite Professor Marguerite Helou best describe the tightness of this *Ahl* bond:

> We all have this feeling, and I raised my *a'ila* (children) and more. I think the great thing we have from our family [*ahl*] is that we are one. Everybody cares for any of us who might be feeling uncomfortable for some reason or another. We (the sisters), our husbands (my *Sihris*) and our children (the children of my sisters) are all still one. If one of the children of my sister feels that I need something, or am psychologically not well, I don't have to open my mouth, you find him on the phone calling me, as though by telepathy. If I am going through financial distress, the money goes immediately to the bank without a word. May the soul of the son of my sister rest in peace; he died two years ago. He once called me saying "*Khaalti*! I feel that you are not alright." I had not said a word to him. He said "I don't know, but I am dreaming about you a lot." So he sent my children and me plane tickets to go see him…

Another example of the tightness of the *ahl* is recounted by one activist who considered the wife of the brother of her father as a female role model in her family. “She was someone who attracted my attention because she was the type that resisted, despite suffering for it, but she resisted and had many problems. The family used to tell my uncle to divorce her.” Apparently members of the natal family are not limited to immediate parents and siblings but also include the following:

Table 2: *Ahl* –أهل – Natal Kin	
Walidi, Baii, Abi, baba	my father
Walidati, Emmi, mama	my mother
Jeddi	my grandfather
Sitti, Jedeti, teta	my grandmother
Akhi, khaii	my brother
Ekhti	my sister
Ibn akhi, Ibn khaii	my brother’s son
Bint akhti, Bint khaii	my brother’s daughter
Ibn ekhti	my sister’s son
Bint ekhti	my sister’s daughter
Sihri, Zawj Ekhti	my sister’s husband
Mart Akhi	my brother’s wife
‘ammi	my father’s brother, parent’s sisters’ husbands
Khaali	my mother’s brother
‘ammti	my father’s sister
Khaalti	my mother’s sister
Mart ‘ammi	my father’s brother’s wife
Zawj ‘ammti	my father’s sister’s husband
Mart khaali	my mother’s brother’s wife
Zawj khaalti	my mother’s sister’s husband
Ibn ‘ammi	my father’s brother’s son
Bint ‘ammi	my father’s brother’s daughter
Ibn ‘ammti	my father’s sister’s son
Bint ‘ammti	my father’s sister’s daughter
Ibn khaali	my mother’s brother’s son
Bint khaali	my mother’s brother’s daughter
Ibn khaalti	my mother’s sister’s son
Bint khaalti	my mother’s sister’s daughter
Mart bayii, mart abi	my step-mother (my father’s wife)

Zawj emmi	my step-father (my mother's husband)

By including grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins in the natal kin category instead of classifying them as members of the extended kin group, this table builds on the terminology used by Charrad (2001: 54) to explain the complexity of determining a person's paternal and maternal lineage.

c. Marital Kin

A *nasseeb* is a relative by marriage and although these relationships are less strong than the *ahl* bond, the marital family can become very important especially to woman. The wife considers them to be her new family. For instance, when I asked Druze Princess Hayat Arslan why and how she became interested in politics, her response was "because we come from a family who has been leading for centuries." The family to which she was referring was certainly her marital rather than her natal one. The list of the members of the *beit hama* or *Nasseebs* is as follows:

Table 3: *Nassab* –نسب – Marital Kin

'ammi, hmaayi	my spouse's father
Hamati, mart 'ammi	my spouse's mother
Ibn Hmaayi	my spouse's brother
Bint Hmaayi	my spouse's sister
Silfi	my spouse's brother
Silfti	my spouse's brother's wife
'adiili	my spouse's sister's husband
Ibn Selfi	my brother-in-law's son
Bint Selfi	my brother-in-law's daughter
Ibn Selfti	my sister-in-law's son
Bint Selfti	my sister-in-law's daughter
Nasiibi	my male relative by marriage
Nasiibti	my female relative by marriage

The *nassab* relationships are both difficult and rewarding. It is noteworthy that the marital family is referred to as *beit hama*, literarily meaning the house of my father-in-law. Therefore, the sister-in-law is referred to as the daughter of my father-in-law and so on. One respondent described living with her in-laws during the early years of her marriage:

> Stephan: when you got married you stayed with your in-law (*beit hmaki*)?
>
> Respondent: For a period of nine months, I was going to lose my mind. We first lived alone and then, until we bought an apartment and furniture, I had to sit there. When the house was ready, my husband did not want to move out, he wanted to stay with his *ahl.* And that was a big problem because there was a lot of interference from them in my life.

Although for Princess Arslan, her father-in-law (*hama*) was empowering and supportive of her public service activities, the situation is often very fraught with conflicts for others. Note here the authority that Meir Majid has over not only his male children but also their wives:

> I came and told the Meir Majid, I said "Ammi, I want to offer my condolences to people at the times of their loss of a beloved one. Chweifat is our village and as the daughter of this village, I would like to do so." He accepted. Faysal [her husband] was pro, Khaoula [the step-mother of her husband] felt that this will be a burden on her.

Women's rights within these three forms of family are restricted by the influence of patriarchy and its maternal expression. Male kin members—including fathers, grandfathers, uncles, brothers, cousins, husbands, sons and in-laws (fathers and

brothers)—exercise control over the personal freedom of women especially among the rural and the poor. Older women—mothers, grandmothers, aunts, sisters and in-laws (mothers and sisters)—exercise control over young women and, more infrequently, over young men. These restrictions are exercised for the sake of protecting the family as a social unit and the individuals as members of the family.

d. The Cousins

The actual term cousin does not exist in Arabic. According to Charrad (2001: 54), "Arabic gives as many as eight different terms to translate the single English word 'cousin', depending on the nature of the kinship link." As in the Maghreb, in Lebanon the natal kin category shows that an immediate cousin can be either the son of a maternal uncle (ibn khali), the son of a paternal uncle (ibn ammi), the son of maternal aunt (ibn khalti), the son of a paternal aunt (ibn amti), the daughter of a maternal uncle (bint khali), the daughter of a paternal uncle (bint ammi), the daughter of maternal aunt (bint khalti), or the daughter of a paternal aunt (bint amti); but all these relatives would count as members of the natal family. However, in Lebanon, individuals refer to a person as cousin figuratively "ibn el am (a son of a paternal uncle)" to describe someone who is related to them through any more complex combination of the relationships listed in the tables above (e.g. ibn bint 'ammi - the son of the daughter of my paternal uncle to mean my cousin).

Alternatively, *qareeb*, is a relative who is defined by a highly complex set of these relationships, which often leaves westerners unable to understand how these types of

relationships are included in the kin group. For the sake of showing how complex these *qaraba* relationships can get, take some relationships in my own family. To explain them, I must embark on by a listing of degrees of connection that are more than is normal in an 'average' American family. For instance, my kids have cousins in Houston whose house we visit often and with whom we spend every holiday. These cousins are the children of the daughter of the son of the brother of the mother of my husband. Similarly, my relative Neda, who lives in Austin, celebrates Thanksgiving with us. She is related to me because she is the wife of the brother of the wife of the son of the brother of the mother of my husband.

More simplified relationships that were mentioned by my respondents include references such as the ones offered by Druze Lina Alameddine's (of the National Democratic Institute) in response to whether any of her kin group members are active in the public affairs, she said: "Oh no, although an Alameddine did manage Middle East Airline, a Najib Alameddine. But now I have someone closer, my sister-in-law (*bint hmayi*), who is married to the son of the sister of the father of Walid Jumblat. So there are Jumblati spheres in my husband's family, if you want." In response to the same question, Shiite Professor Azza Charara Beydoun responded: "My family is from beit[10] Osseiran." So I asked whether there were any parliamentarians from *beit Osseiran*. She responded: "Of course! Adel Osserian is a very important person." So when I asked how he was related to her, she responded: "he is the son of the sister of the father of my mother."

[10] Beit also means Ahl which means family.

e. Mahsoubieh (Symbolic Kin)

Mahsoubieh (محسوبية) or protégé is an aspect of connectivity that means "to be counted as," indicating membership in or fellowship with, a clique or kin group. I borrow the concept of connectivity from Joseph (1993: 452) who uses it to describe "relationships in which a person's boundaries are relatively fluid so that a person feels a part of significant others." Thus, creating and maintaining connectivity involve a process of "shaping and being shaped by significant others" (Joseph 1993: 453). Charrad describes these types of connections as fictive: "Sometimes the common ancestry is only fictive and imagined. Like a nation, a kin-based community is an imagined community" (2007a: 61-2). In a society that puts a premium on connectivity of a certain kind (of kinship, confession, party) individuals accrue social capital by associating themselves with reputable kin, political or confessional group.

Family lineage is the most significant form of this symbolic relationship, as is evident in Beydoun's claim to be a "from beit Osseiran." Azza's father is a Charrara, her husband is a Beydoun but I am not sure who in her family is from the Osseiran family. I would like to assume her mother, but she did not need to articulate her relationship to the Osseirans in the course of our conversation. Similarly, Shiite Professor Mona Fayad claims, as we shall see in the next chapter, to be from the Qubaisi family of 10,000 members although she did not explain how she is related to the Qubaisi. In the previous chapter, I hinted to my symbolic kin membership in the Musallam family which benefited me tremendously in gaining access to my respondents even though I barely know a few branches of the Musallam family. My late mother-in-law is a Musallam and she was one of fifteen

siblings. The Musallam family tree that I own traces the family history to the 1700. Therefore, in public, my symbolic kin membership is associated with the Musallam clan.

Although this connectivity reflects symbolic family lineage, it also extends beyond cousins and relatives. My respondents used kinship terms to refer to their colleagues, friends and neighbors. Majed believes that the Mahsoubieh is a bigger concept than lineage: “Family lineage is significant because some families have rich heritage and important legacies, you cannot underestimate *nassab*, but Mahsoubieh can be also attributed to some opportunistic people who do not have the rich family heritage. Those are the opportunistic people who, with or without the family heritage, with or without the credible qualifications, sweet talk their way to power. This is Lebanon!”

The bond of symbolic kinship is also shared among those who work together for a period of time, especially under a charismatic central leader. For instance, when I asked Druze Aida Nassrallah if she socializes with other people at the League for Lebanese Women’s Rights or Mrs. Linda Mattar, the director, she said: “Yes. We were together yesterday. If we need to go fulfill social obligations, go out to eat, she comes to my house and I go to hers. I go to her more often because I live in the mountain and most of our work is in Beirut, so I visit her more often. Not one week passes without us meeting either at the center or with my colleagues. For my generation of colleagues, Madame Linda is a mother to us. By the way my mother’s name is also Linda.” Note that she did not say that Madame Linda is like a mother, but rather that she is a mother.

This symbolic reference to non-kin individuals as family is a form of linguistic endearment that was expressed by respondents with established positions and those just starting out in life, the autonomous and embedded, activists and politicians. Suad Joseph (1999) found the phenomenon of symbolic kin prevalent in Lebanese society's daily transactions: "Kin vocabularies might be used in political and economic negotiations to evoke the obligations and values associated with kin terms, creating pathways to critical services, resources and further networks. Kin terms and values, then, in Lebanese public life, have often been among the most powerful symbols and cement of political, economic, and social processes" (Joseph 1999: 300).

The literature I mentioned earlier has provided me a framework to bring the work of sociologists and anthropologists to consensus in this case study. On the individual level, the kinship system is both beneficial and restrictive. The first four categories of family structure—the immediate nuclear family, the natal extended family, the marital extended family and a general category of cousins and relatives—encompass most of the types mentioned by other scholars. Symbolic kinship, which is similar to fictive kinship that anthropologists study, includes a category that cannot be normally explained by family lineages. In this section, I have provided a typology of definitions for kinship as understood in the Lebanese social context to describe extended and nuclear families. The next section will show how acquiring social capital is influenced by kin groups' social status, community origin, and confessional connections. Using class and community origin typologies, I will next explore how family relationships and networks are mediated by the family's community of origin and social status, and in turn reinforce cultural

norms of that community.

C. The Impact of Community Origin, Social Status and Confession

The following will show that key to the relationship between religion, urbanization, and class is still kinship, which is the most important determinant of social position and personal opportunity. Most Lebanese recognize that the close connection between kinship, confessional and class divisions presents an obstacle to nationalism and democracy. These systems are closely linked as forces in the face of change and opening spaces in the public sphere. Lebanese disagree about whether the 15-year civil war reinforced these systems or weakened them; but my observations of contemporary Lebanon confirm that the family still serves as the basic unit of the society, while religious groups form the second level of connection and class and urban-rural divisions constitute the third. Lina Abou Habib, a Christian Director of the Collective for Research, Training, Development and Action (CRTD-A), told me "patriarchy cuts across social class, economic classes, religious classes, nationality. I think that you know patriarchy is much more … is actually beyond these different social categories." This is my observation, too.

Bourdieu's (1985) approach to studying social capital is applicable to Lebanese society, which is highly differentiated by family status. Helou suggests that the family maintains the durable networks of trust in Lebanese society and keeps it "very traditional" despite its modern appearance, "You find differences between the rural areas and the urban areas but in the final analysis, when they are faced with trouble or they have to make an

important decision or whatever, the family plays a very important role."

In Lebanon, preliminary trust is established based on the recognition of family name. Family members need not know each other in order to benefit from their extended kinship connection. Kinship determines the individual's social status and his level of trustworthiness, which in turn facilitates other relations. These features tend to have grave impact on the person because the family's positive or negative reputation overshadows individual accomplishments in most cases. Although Former Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri was a well-known figure, people still remember that he came from an average family and had to prove himself through his hard work. Catholic Wadad Chakhtoura commented on Hariri by saying, "Eh! He made something out of himself. He worked on himself for fifteen years until he was recognized and [accepted socially]. He did a few projects and built few companies and addressed a few issues so that his name became known. He kept working, but it was not easy to do over night. He proved himself and made a voice for him and his family." Also note the following excerpt from my interview with Sunni Afifa al-Said, who begins by stressing her individual efforts as an activist, but soon slips into the influence of her family name:

> Said: My efforts advanced me more than my family name. It is true that I come from a well known, respectable Beiruti family (ai'la). And my husband is also from a well known Beiruti Aila. And Beirut is small and all people know each. So when I entered the office of President Saeb Salam, he asked: "Said, which Said?" I said: Najeeb al-Said. He said "may his soul rest in peace Najeeb al-Said" so you see?

Stephan: Who is Najeeb al-Said?

Said: Najeeb al-Said is ‘ammi, the father of my husband, also a renowned personality, not politically, but socially and as a Beiruti family (aila).

Family relationships are institutionalized and operationalized into what Charrad (2001; 2007a) has called “kin-based solidarities.” Large and influential families tend to be well recognized in society and draw support from even remote “cousins.” This support is the historical residue of the feudal system, in which women tend to follow the political alliances of their kin groups. For instance, political alliances in the Druze faith are distributed between two major families: the Arslans and the Jumblats. Followers of Walid Jumblat tend to support him unconditionally in his pro-western stance. If a Druze criticizes Jumblat, s/he is easily identified as an Arslan follower. Yet, it is noteworthy that the two families have intermarried with one another for many centuries.

In the Second Republic that emerged after the Taef Agreement had ended the civil war, political hopefuls could earn candidacy status in their districts on the basis of three options (Sader 1998). The first and least effective mechanism that was newly implemented in the post-civil war era is running independently for a parliamentary seat. This mechanism relies heavily on the charisma of the candidate but lacks the organizational structure and financial backing of the traditional political machine. In fact, one of my respondents, Linda Mattar did use this approach in the 2000 elections, but she was elected despite receiving a large number of votes. The second mechanism is to gain backing from an organization or privately owned enterprise, which agrees to provide the

financial support and access to voters. Individuals such as Isam Fares, who owned the Netherlands-based Ballast-Nedam company, one of the largest civil engineering and construction firms in the world, used this modality.[11] Using his financial empire, Fares employed his business firm to manage the operation of his successful campaign for parliament in 1996. The last, most effective and most popular electoral machine is run by sectarian political parties. These parties enjoy a wide base of popular support and a coordinated team, which is motivated by shared ideologies and beliefs. Although costly for the individual due to corruption, affiliation with these political parties guarantees the candidate listing on the ballot of that party. In most cases, names that go on the list are decided by a central committee and the leader of the party, who is typically a quasi-feudal member of the elites, rather than in a party convention.

In assessing the total sum of capitals that a candidate brings to the party, candidates' "family exchange value" (تجيير عائلي - taj-yeer Aili) is calculated in the sum of social capital of the individual. Therefore, a candidate who descends from a large family (in which family members can be counted in the thousands) brings to the political party the trust, solidarity, and networks of their reliable voting units, kin groups. This value is estimated as the number of family members who are likely to vote for the candidate and his party's entire ballot. Individuals with large and influential families are sought because they draw many devoted voters.

[11] Fares used to own British Aerospace; then he bought a large stake in the U.S.-based Wedge Group Inc. investment and industrial firm http://www.issamfares.com/content/2/biography.

Thus, status can be an effect of the kinship networks, which vary by place of residence between the city, the village or the suburbs. City-dwellers are likely to have social networks that included more colleagues and friends, while the village and suburb dweller tended to have a higher percentage of family members and neighbors in their networks. Family connections, however, are included in all forms of networks, but with varying degrees of importance. In terms made famous by Granovetter (1973; 1983), they constitute both strong ties among close family members (although the kinship universe also, of course, allows for weak ties, on the basis of the family name), but they also form weak ties as bridges between clusters of people. According to Sunni Rasha Moumeh, family relations are pretty much dictated by class and rural-urban divisions:

> Moumeh: But also these networks of women that happen in rural areas, and there are a lot of them… and they are informal networks, they're not organized at all …boundaries are different when you go to different areas and talk about different classes because this isn't talked about in the society. I don't want to say that the society there is so different as to make it seem like two different worlds. But the structure is very very different.

1. COMMUNITY ORIGIN

As early as Le Play, the location of the family (in the country, in the city, in an economically developed area, in an undeveloped area, on a cultural or geopolitical frontiers, etc.) has been seen as a constitutive factor in of the formation of different types of family relations and structures. Within this tradition, I propose to analyze how, in Lebanon, community origin is a determinant of family relations and structures not only

according to affiliations with tribal, rural, and urban communities but also including the poor suburbs, or Dahiyyah. All of these dimensions differ in their impact on social relations and acceptable customs. Although scholars have recognized some of these divisions, they have neglected to see that they can be present simultaneously in one society (as we have seen, Le Play originally proposes his family types on a developmental time scale) and thus how they can affect individuals' statuses differently in as much as they are recognized as such by the agents who enact these structures.

The emphasis in sociological research on the tie between kinship and geographic location, which was once of concern to the Chicago school, for instance in studying migration, has been diminished as sociologists assumed more homogenized family norms since the 1980s and have presented kinship in a stratified manner in their studies on family relations vis-à-vis urban/rural life. Kinship is mostly irrelevant to "urban mainstream America" but significant to primitive societies, rural communities and minorities of all sorts. For instance, in *Social Forces*, *American Sociological Review* and *American Journal of Sociology* since 1990, I found that kinship in the western societies was mostly discussed in relations to four types of groups: low income families (Kana'iaupuni et al. 2005), minorities (Sarkisian and Gerstel 2004), single mother families (Hao and Brinton 1997; Hogan et al. 1990), and migrant groups (Palloni et al. 2001). Kin groups were mentioned as significant among the dominant class and race only in historical contexts (Hillmann 2008), or in reference to endangered farming communities, or even depicting an anomaly in what constitutes modern western social relations (Morawska 2003; Salamon 1994; Schneider 2001). Anthropological studies on

the significance of kinship in primordial communities are abundant, whereas sociological studies of the same subject focus on family role in economy (Peng 2004; Williams 1991b), the danger of industrialization in destroying traditional cultures (Lavely 1990), and the impact of globalization on changing family relations and norms (Kishor 1993).

As is typical in primordial cultures on which the process of modernization was imposed by external forces, i.e., colonialism and global capitalism, scholars posited that in the Middle East, kin groups have retained their dominance over the social, economic and political aspects of life
(See for instance Charrad 2001; Fernea 2003; and Joseph 2001). Socially, Barakat describes the family as "the basic unit of production and the center of Arab social organization and socioeconomic activities. It evolved into a patriarchal, pyramidally hierarchical (particularly with respect to sex and age), and extended institution" (Barakat 1993: 97). Socio-economically, the Lebanese state "is not organized to provide basic social services, like welfare, security, health and education… The Lebanese solution is to pool the resources, services and contacts that the extended family and clan can provide, and this provision is the basis of the greatest part of interaction among kinsmen" (Farsoun and Farsoun 1974: 104-125).

In Arabic, the terms (*Asel* - أصل), which is translated as origin, is used to indicate an individual's affiliation with a particular geographic community. In everyday speech, people refer to their community affiliation using kin-specific terminology. I propose using the term *Community Origin* to describe individual's affiliations or filiations with

their geographic place of origin. This is evident in PM Nuhad Suaid's claim to authenticity as a representative of the mountainous region of Akoura: "I am the daughter of the Akoura region." This affiliation constitutes a form of identification that reflects a symbolic relation with the community as a patriarchal structure. My respondents identified themselves as daughters of a geographical region (mantiqa – منطقة) like Akoura, a city (medina – مدينة) like Beirut, a village (day'a – ضيعة) like Bcharri, or the suburb (al-Dahhiya – الضاحية), specifically the Southern suburbs of Beirut although other poor suburbs exist.

The Thirteen Century Tunisian sociologist Ibn Khalldun differentiated between *badu* and *hadar* (Bedouin-sedentary) as the two main components of Arab societies. Characteristics of the Bedouin way of life reverberate in the village, which Halim Barakat (1993) adds as the third pattern of lifestyle with its own distinct characters. Very few scholarly studies have added to Barakat's work on urban life in Arab societies. But even Barakat's three pillar paradigm unambiguously applies to contemporary Lebanon. Lebanese society is dynamic in its nature and forever changing; local and international migration, war, and demographic shifts have influenced social norms, creating some new ones and eliminating others. Emigration and unequal fertility rates, for instance, have over time given the Shiite a majority status, while the war resulted in the creation of Hezbollah and its dominance in the South and the southern suburb of Beirut. While one might argue that Beirut's urban qualities dominate Lebanese culture, the strength of the village life still has to be reckoned with even when attempting to navigate the social norms in the city.

Taking kinship, then, as our central thread, the following describes how the differentiated settings of community origin in the Lebanese society impact the hegemonic discourse on women's rights and responsibilities within the kinship system. This study views the system as a set of continua that characterize group relationships in accordance with Pahl's (2008: 299) claim that: "There are a whole series of continua, which together form a process, acting not so much on communities as on groups and individuals at particular places in the social structure." A continuum of relationships exists in which is forged the complexes of Lebanese social structures and relations.

a. Tribal Settings

Most Middle Eastern societies stem from tribal social structures that originally evolved to adapt to a nomadic life style and have had to readapt to sedentary urban or rural settings. According to the Bedouin perspective, kinship reflects membership in "the *qabila* (tribe) or *'ashira* (clan); *hamula, fakhdh, batn,* or *'aila* (extended family), and the *usra* (nuclear family)" (Barakat 1993: 50-51). Charrad (2001) uses the term kin groupings to "refer to segments of a tribe, thus to a group that tends to be smaller than a tribe but shares the same logic of organization." "The meaning of 'tribe' in particular," she points out, "varies greatly depending on the context." Other constituents that she identifies include "lineages, patrilineages, clans, kin groups, kin networks, kin-based forms of association, and sometimes large family groups."

Lebanon differs from many Middle Eastern countries in that tribal and Bedouin groupings are relatively insignificant, affecting a handful of families scattered in the

Beqaa Mountains and isolated from modern forms of civilization (although it is not uncommon to encounter a satellite dish outside a tent as you drive through the Beqaa). In fact, in my interviews with one prominent activist, Linda Matar, she insisted that the Lebanese are not at all tribal, but rather, an important difference, strictly familial:

> Stephan: I would like to ask you regarding the significance of *'ashira*.
>
> Matar: We do not have *'ashira*, we do not have tribes.
>
> Stephan: Not tribes, but families, like the Smiths or the Jones
>
> Matar: Families, we have families

And families according to Barakat are the heart of rural life.

b. The Village Life

While kinship has been linked to primordial tribal social structures in most Arab countries, Lebanese society can be better understood in the context of village life. The small village mentality is a feature that characterizes much of Lebanese culture and seems, to the Lebanese, to be symbolically genuine. "…The Lebanese village as a type of kinship structure may be defined as *an endogamous local group which is segmented into patrilineages which are preferably endogamous but often exogamous in practice"* (Gulick 1953: 371). Barakat describes the village's social organization as "an intricate net of interrelationships of extended families" (1993: 55). Rural lifestyles were and remain significant in Lebanon. This type of kinship structure is more accurately portrayed as an extended family that is entrenched in the village mentality and norms. Peasants' relationship "to the land is inseparable from their intimate and interdependent family relationships. So the village may be described as a community of extended families

securing their livelihood through agricultural and other directly related activities" (Barakat 1993: 55).

In 1949, Tannous (1949) estimated that 75% of Lebanon's population was rural, whereas today the share has shrunk down to 4% (Central Administration of Statistics) (LCAS 1998). The drastic demographic change is due in part to 15 years of uprooting civil war, but partly as well to economically driven rural-urban migration, which reflects the impact of free trade economic policy in Lebanon. The fierce competition in agricultural imports from European and neighboring countries, coupled with the poor economic resources in rural areas has led to a massive shrinking of the agricultural sector and the impoverishment of the village.

Life in the village is characterized not only by its economic hardship, but also by poor treatment of women. Fertility is high in the village and living conditions lack modern standards. The contemporary patronage system, which is rooted in many ways in the old feudal order, still governs economic opportunities and social relations. Jean Makdisi observed the disparity between urban and rural conditions in regards to women's rights:

> Stephan: Somebody said that the Lebanese culture is very gentle in dealing with its women. Therefore the women are better off than in other situations.
>
> Makdisi: Go to Baalbak or Hermel or something. Go and ask the women who works from dawn to dusk who has a baby in the field and carries on. She has the baby and then she continues working in the field. She doesn't get a piaster to her

service. Ask her if she is dealt gently by society. I don't think so. So I think it depends on your class, we come back to class.

Although migrants to Beirut leave behind their properties and simple life, they bring with them to the city the social customs, relations and religiosity that were developed in the village. Eleven of my respondents (four Christians, three Shiites and four Druze) had strong ties to the village, while only one actually lived permanently in a "village." Seven of these respondents visited their village on the weekend and during the summer. Two were Christian politicians who represented rural districts and visited them often. Fourteen of the respondents (eight Christians, two Shiites and four Sunnis) came directly from Beirut, Sidon, Tripoli, or another of Lebanon's major cities. And four respondents (one Christian and three Shiites) were born and raised in Beirut's suburb, *al-dahiya*, or currently live in it or in another suburb.

c. The Citadins

To be a *citadin*,[12] or an urban dweller, in Lebanon endows the person with a higher level of comfort, flexibility of movement in the public sphere, and a greater level of autonomy within the private sphere. This limited autonomy plays out within family relations and structures and is dependent on the discretion of individual families, who are highly differentiated by class. Despite the slight variation in class, overall my finding suggests that citadin activists remain closely connected to their kin groups. My observation is similar to the findings of Charrad (2006a: 45), in Tunisia where "The level of interaction

[12] I use the French concept *citadin* to describe residents and all that is relative of the city.

with extended kin remains high despite the increasing prevalence of nuclear households. It is the dominant form of social interaction even for women living in urban areas. Despite the changes that they made in response to a changing environment, families in Tunisia have also shown remarkable continuity in their relations with kin." In Lebanon, Al-Said who comes from a reputable middle class Beiruti family and is married to a Beiruti man, views her family connections as enabling of her activism in the public sphere. She connects her patriotic feeling and her civic engagement to her being a Beiruti; her husband's connection with the city enables his empowerment of her:

> Among other things is my patriotism - as a citizen I adore my county and adore anything called Beirut… I love Beirut and I am attached to every corner in it. I love it and (during the war) I could not see it die, I could not see it die. Every bomb that was dropped on its walls was falling in my heart; and eventually a bomb did hit my house... One day I told my husband that I wanted to run for city council; I have things that I wanted to do. He said "I support whatever you want to do." I said: having a campaign can be expensive. He said: "whatever it takes from one lira to a million." He too is in love with Beirut. Out of my love for Beirut, I felt that I could give and represent women in the city council.

The names of most native Beiruti families are familiar to one another; however, many non-Beirutis reside in the city or on its outskirts. Here, the fact of having come to the city can operate as a status marker and figure in the way people recognize and trust each other.

The Lebanese have been generally known as urban merchant people whose cities have existed for over 5000 years and whose ships have sailed throughout Mediterranean since ancient times (Tannous 1949). Of Lebanon's 4,200,000 inhabitants, over 2.6 millions live in its five major cities (1.7 million in Beirut; half a million in Tripoli; 200,000 in Sidon; over 117,000 in Tyre and about 100,000 in Zahle). A study conducted in 1997 by the Central Administration of Statistics and published in 1998 estimates that some 90% of the population is urban (note variation from other estimates) with the majority working in services and a 21.6% of the labor force being females (LCAS 1998). Another study conducted by ESCWA estimates the percentage of the urban population in Lebanon in 2000 at 96% (DESA 2003). Today, Lebanon's urban life is famous for its financial market, culture, entertainment and tourism. In fact, Beirut was ranked ninth in 2006 among the world's top ten best cities overall, following New York and proceeding San Francisco by *Travel and Leisure Magazine* (TLM 2006). And the New York Times declares Beirut the number one destination for 2009 (Sherwood and Williams 2009). A respondent describes the Citadins' tolerance for sexual diversity as unique to Lebanon: "Beirut is such a bubble. We go outside Beirut and as if you go to another country. And not all of Beirut, you have to go to downtown or the Mono or Jemaizeh. And you have communities that are extremely liberated, extremely liberated, like among young people. Like for me, my social circles, it's very, not just gay people, normal and natural, and it's very much don't ask don't tell. I don't know how accurate these things really are, but you go to a club, and it's very sexual."

d. The City-Village

Residents of Beirut's Southern Suburb, al-Dahhiya, live in an environment that can be described as both a gemeinschaft and a gesellschaft in Tönnies famous sociological dichotomy between organic and derived social arrangements (2001). In her ethnographic study of al-Dahhiya in *An Enchanted Modern: Gender and Public Piety in Shi'i Lebanon,* Lara Deeb (2006) describes how modernity and democracy intersect with piety to determine women's rights in such a social setting. During the civil war, al-Dahiyya was transformed into a Shiite ghetto as it became a Hezbollah redoubt. In al-Dahhiya, the Lebanese Shiites, who had been economically and ideologically marginalized, emerged as a religious "movement of the deprived," using education and religion to combat leftist ideologies and Western materialism. The Shiites in al-Dahhiya took to embodying piety in their daily lives through conservative veiling and dress, prayers, and limiting physical contact between the sexes. There, public piety is viewed as a counterweight to features of modern life that were famously described by Weber as an 'iron cage'. Weber's phrase refers to the irreversible transformation of organic communities in the West into impersonal associations in which the binding social nexus was self-interest. In contrast to barbarism or backwardness, modernness (in Arabic, a term having connotations of "civilization," "progress," "development," and "urbanization") indicates the community's technological level rather than its culture. To be modern is to enjoy the benefits of modern technology, and perhaps be current with media trends, but it does not imply, as it does in the West, autonomous and secular attitudes (Deeb 2006: 17, 19). It is a term, then, within which even an Islamist movement can find legitimacy.

In Pahl's (2008) opinion while "some people are in the city," they are "not of it." Among those who are not cidatin although they live in the city or on its outskirts, are residents of al-Dahhiya. Social relationships in al-Dahhiya are very unique. Individuals who technically live inside urban parameters are governed by norms similar to those prevalent in the village, mainly radical conservative Islam. Pahl (2008) suggests that a distinction should be made between those who reside in the city and those are from the city. Three of the four respondents from al-Dahiiya referred to it as a "working class" district not only lacking in positive role models or public services, but also ruled by radical and conservative social forces, which threaten family stability by the recruitment of young men to join Hezbollah's militia. One respondent moved out of the Dahhiya to protect her son:

> Activist: The problem is that they have engrained confessionalism and religion. For example, we were told that as Shiites we must support each other, believe more, and unite. This did not influence me personally but it did affect some of my brothers, because they were young. We were in al-Dahhiya, and therefore I left it. You know? I now live in a farther out district. It wasn't that was afraid I was going to be influenced, I am sure. They cannot influence me but I was worried about my son growing up and…
>
> Stephan: Getting swayed?
>
> Activist: Yes, for sure. Our community environment has a bigger impact than the family (*Ahl*). No matter how hard I work to raise and guide my children, the impact of the community in which we live is stronger.

The impact of extremism can be felt in how Hezbollah governance extends into various aspects of society in al-Dahhiya. For instance, Rima Fakhry, previous leader of the Hezbollah women's committee, describes some of the social programs they run in al-Dahhiya:

> Fakhry: For instance, we have someone responsible for cultural work. We do cultural activities to modernize women's cultural status in the society; in the entire society, not just Hezbollah. We organize lectures, conferences, and cultural workshops. We train women in many areas, for instance: child care, marital relations – how they can be successful. There are many subjects but not necessarily Islamic. We teach non-Islamic things in addition to Islam.
>
> Stephan: Social?
>
> Fakhry: Yes. We have social programs on the ground. Our expression "the ground" refers to the mosques, *hussainiyats*[13], specialized centers, cultural centers, and various workshops. We have a tremendous movement in this type of work, even in literacy programs. I remember fifteen years ago we started our programs in combating illiteracy and social revival/stimulus/incentive and to date we have reached about 4000 women in West Beirut and al-Dahhiya. We have reached our goals in the subject of illiteracy. So, we have social workers responsible for social development, philanthropy, and others.

2. FAMILY'S SOCIAL STATUS

Since the reputation of the kin group provides, as it were, the social masks behind which

[13] A Hussainiyah is a Shiite religious charitable organization.

people in Lebanon meet, social status is closely linked to one's membership in a kin group, as socioeconomic advantages accrue to those with the most prestigious family name. This is a stronger determinant than even educational attainment. In their attempt to measure social class in Lebanon, Zurayk et al. (1987) argue that like other developing countries, "the baseline conceptual and methodological work by social stratification specialists to develop relevant scales and rankings of social class position is still in its early stages" (Zurayk et al. 1987: 174). Therefore, they resorted to proposing a family-level measure of social class as measured by the family head's educational characteristics. While I agree with their use of the family level to determine social class, I argue that the relationship should be inversed – that family status grounds the striving for educational achievement rather than vice versa. Thus, family status transcends the head's education and constitutes a strong determinant of the individual's social status.

The family's position in society —which can be attained by coercion, wealth or charisma (similar in principle to Weber's types of leadership)— facilitates the individual's economic, political and social affairs (El-Khoury and Panizza 2005). People establish their credibility in the society through their family's name and the position it occupies; they influence it and are influenced by it. Social status is viewed within the "lieu" (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992) that the family occupies publically. This lieu is established based on the recognition of family name which endows people at birth with widely varying amounts of social capital. Those who have more, use it, and those who have less, seek either to create it or find alternatives to it.

Although I emphasize the social force of the family name as opposed to any other variable of social achievement, the system is dynamic enough that family names can rise or fall. Mostly, however, the position of the extended family in the society is passed on to members, whose actions are judged within the perimeters of the family reputation. Endogamy and homogony are highly encouraged and rewarded. Additionally, the extended family determines its members' social status and provides them with solidarity and networks.

My emphasis on the positionality of family status might suggest a static description of the Lebanese social scene; again, this is definitely not true, or only part of my claim. Many historical and political incidences have caused a shift in social status. However, this shift rarely happens on the individual level. Historical shifts such as the civil war and rise of Hezbollah caused the replacement of one set of families with another. The civil war, for instance, forced upper and middle class families to emigrate and gave more clout to previously deprived families. Still, Lebanese social scientists refused to blame Lebanon's social stratification problem entirely on the war. "Nowadays, there is a common belief that the expansion of poverty is a result of the war. This is only half the truth. There are structural causes particular to Lebanon's social and economic systems that have engendered serious discrepancies in the society, particularly as regards income distribution" (Haddad 1996). El Khoury and Panizza (2005) show that, on average, Lebanon is characterized by extremely low levels of social mobility, comparable to those of the least socially mobile Latin American countries. However, they did find differences in social mobility across religious groups especially among the Christian Maronite and

the Muslim Shiite who, were more socially mobile than the Muslim Sunni.

Lebanese themselves do not use the concept of social class; they tend to think of stratification more in term of social status. Using the concept of class to describe the Lebanese society of the late 1960s, Fuad Khuri (1969) observes the presence of four social classes in the Lebanese society of the 1960s. These socioeconomic categories have to a great extent remained till modern times. He labels the most affluent social class as the notables (*al-wujaha'*), who are distinguished individuals that belong to "established houses." Among these notables are those who control their extended kin group as well as other classes, who are thus called zoama. The two middle classes, the affluent and the honorable poor, compose the majority of the Lebanese population. The affluent (*al-mubhabahin*) include "wealthy landowners and merchants, university graduates and the professional class of medical doctors, engineers and lawyers." The honorable poor (*al-masturin*) include "small landowners and shopkeepers, teachers, technicians, tradesmen" and "clerks, secretaries and ordinary soldiers…"(Khuri 1969: 37). Finally, the needy (*al-muhtajin*) comprise the poorest social group which is dependent on the assistance of other social groups.

My fieldwork led me to classify the family's social status in the following four socio-economical categories: Four of my respondents (two Christians and two Muslims) were from the elites (*al-wujaha'*), or as I shall call them later the Velvet society; twenty one were "bourgeois", five Muslims and three Christians in the intellectual category, and 13 from middle class families (four Christians and eight Muslims) that are similar to Khuri's

category of (*al-masturin*). Five of the respondents descended from working class families (four Christians and one Muslim), although these were also different from the needy category that Khuri observed in 1969.

Table 4: Activists by Class and Community Origin

CLASS	COMMUNITY ORIGIN											
	Village				City				Al-Dahhiya			
	C	Sh	S	D	C	Sh	S	D	C	Sh	S	D
Working Class	1				3					1		
Middle Class	1	1		3	2		2		1	2		
Intellectuals		2			3	2	1					
Elites	2			1			1					
Total	4	3		4	8	2	4		1	3		

C= Christian; Sh=Shiite; S=Sunni and D=Druze

a. The Velvet Society

The elite families, or as Princess Arlan calls them the "Velvet families – العائلات المخملية" (in reference to the silky luxurious fabric which has historically been worn by royalty) are the remnants of Lebanese aristocracy that ruled in the Ottoman era; these are the Emirs, the Beys and the Sheikhs.[14] Members of the Velvet elite kin groups are automatically provided access to the public sphere through their kinship structure. According to Princess Arslan, only about 100 elite families remain in Lebanon today.

Within the eighteen recognized denominations, the ex-officio feudal and the nouveau riche have seized control over many of the political, economic and social aspects of

[14] Note that while the Bey and Emir are titles still used by the Druze community, merely assigned to Jumblat Bey and Emir Arslan, the title Sheikh is used by the Gemayel Maronite family and the Harriri Family among Sunnis. No Shiites use these titles.

Lebanese society, creating in the process the Zoama[15] phenomenon. Zoama translates into leaders, chiefs, lords, masters and heads of a people, and their political significance is hard to overstate. A handful of Zoama speaks on behalf of their confessional groups and represents them politically. In exchange for alliance and loyalty, people benefit from close association with these leaders. Officially, the most influential of these Zoama headed political parties enjoy constituencies selected by their confession and region. Candidates, who wish to run on the ballots of any of these parties, pay these Zoama thousands and sometimes millions of dollars.

Current Zoama acquired their political leadership status by being descendents of traditional feudal families, religious leaders, financial giants or old war lords. The Druze Zoama are Talal Arslan (head of the Lebanese Democratic Party) and Jumblat (head of Progressive Socialist Party). The Shiites leaders are Al-Sayyed Hasan Nassrallah, the leader of Hezbollah and Nabih Berry with his Amal movement. While both Hezbollah and Amal are proletariat movements meant to empower the Shiites, Nassrallah's title, al-Sayyed, indicate his religious status as an heir of the Prophet Mohammad. The majority of the Sunnis support the nouveau riche Hariri and his Future Movement (Mustaqbal), whereas traditional Sunni leaders like Huss and Karami play less significant roles and do not head political parties. The Maronites who previously formed the "Qurnet Shehwan" coalition with the Maronite Patriarch Mar Nasrallah Boutros Cardinal Sfeir, include leaders like Samir Geagea and his Lebanese Forces and former President Sheikh Amine Gemayel, head of the Phalange party. Other Maronites follow former military leader

[15] Plural of Zaeem.

Michel Aoun, who heads the Free Patriotic Movement (al-Tayyar al-Hurr – التيار الحر), or give their loyalty to the son of the Franjieh family and their heir Suleiman who heads the Maradah Movement.

b. The Fortunate Intellectuals

Historically, many of the same intellectual families have held positions of intellectual leadership in a tradition that goes back hundreds of years. Members of these kin groups are born into a tradition of public leadership maintained through their kin's cultural capital, which is "institutionalized in the form of educational qualifications" (Bourdieu 1986: 243), [16] for it was their high levels of educational attainments which separated them from other middle class families, not their incomes. The extended family afforded a tradition and security that allowed activists in this category to feel privileged as a group. Those who have had a long history of higher level of educational attainments among their kin groups considered themselves fortunate. I was told by one of my informants that there are about 1000 families of this sort in Lebanon. For them, patriotism and service become natural byproducts of education and a path for gaining fame and significance among traditional and new competitors. A family tradition of intellectual attainment can even be carried across borders. In substantiating the accomplishments of family who emigrated from Palestine in Lebanon, Orthodox Anita Nassar attributes the reason to education: "They were educated, they came from Palestine educated. Yeah they were privileged.

[16] Bourdieu argues that cultural capital exits in three forms: in the *embodied state*, i.e., in the form of long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body; in the *objectified* state, in the form of cultural goods (pictures, books, dictionaries, instruments, machines, etc.), which are the trace or realization of theories or critiques of these theories, problematic, etc.; and in the *institutionalized* state, a form of objectification which must be set apart because… it confers entirely original properties on the cultural capital which it is presumed to guarantee Bourdieu, Pierre. 1986. "The Forms of Capital." Pp. 241-58 in *Handbook of theory and research for the sociology of education*, edited by J. G. Richardson. New York: Greenwood Press.

They were the bourgeoisie there. They were from the bourgeoisie from Jerusalem. This is why they could afford to go to best schools, the British schools. They came here and they had at least in their hand a diploma from a university, something. This is what made them. This was their passport to work and to start all over again."

c. The Middle Class

According to the standard social movement paradigm, this group should encourage the most individualistic autonomy among its members. The individualistic ethos of the middle class in conjunction with capitalism overcame the aristocracy in England and France, and similarly overcame the planter aristocracy in the early American republic to build the United States' civil society in its own image. As middle class' autonomy is justified functionally, in terms of upward social mobility and widening democracy, one might assume that that Lebanese middle class will be similarly oriented. However, in Lebanon the middle class faces the choices of a continuing economic deterioration, emigration, or inertia, according to one of my interviewees, Orthodox Ugarit Younan. Her perception is based in recent history as documented by Kubursi (1999) who surveys the net effect of the war on the skilled and professional class: "Professionals and skilled workers with international transfer prices (i.e., with skills that are easily transferable in the international market) emigrated, leaving semi-skilled or unskilled workers behind to fend for themselves. Losses in productivity were experienced in most sectors and real incomes of the unskilled plunged sharply, exacerbating an already iniquitous and skewed income distribution system." Kubrusi cites Labaki's estimates that a total of 740,000 people left Lebanon between 1975 and 1988 and Kubursi (1999) claims that an additional

240,000 “emigrated in the first eight months of 1989.”[17] Another quarter million left during the Syrian occupation in the 1990s and more after the 2006 war.

Even before the civil war, the Lebanese middle class had not been the engine of the struggle against colonialism, a role they played in other decolonizing countries. Rather, it was the elite families who led the battle, and even today the descendents of the fathers of Lebanon’s independence are Lebanon’s current sectarian leaders. Historically, it has been very difficult for the middle class to penetrate this holdover of feudal and sectarian aristocracy, which is entrenched in what Ibn Khaldoun (1967) called *Assabiya* based on kinship and religious memberships. In my interview with her, Professor Azza Charara Beydoun explains that the political system in Lebanon is not necessarily intrinsically hostile to women, but is rather a system closed to all nontraditional groups:

> Beydoun: Our political system is exclusive, allowing only traditional families into politics. It excludes new and unconventional groups like women, the youth[18], the proletariat and even new community gatherings because it is a very exclusive system. Our political system is designed for confessions and families that turned the state into a herd of sheep and allocated resources and powers among themselves, thus closing the door in the face of those outside this system, including women.

[17] Labaki, Butros. 1989. "L'emigration externe." Maghreb, Machrek 125 (July-September): 40-52.) and Labaki, Butros. 1990. "Lebanese Emigration During the War, 1979-1989." Manuscripts were cited in Kubursi 1999, p.72.

However, Orthodox Amal Dibo, one of Laure Moghaizel's former associates, feels that the bourgeoisie in Lebanon is very alive and a very interesting agent of social advancement. Although they do not possess the zoama status, the bourgeois have been able to live a freer life and play an important role in liberating women. A bourgeois woman is emancipated in Dibo's opinion because: "She's educated, she's identifying, I mean, there is more possibility of equality." So, education, equality and "identifying" [19] are among the five elements that describe the Lebanese bourgeoisie: social mobility through education; freedom from tradition; a livelihood and ability to reinvent themselves; openness and "identifying" with people who come from different paths and faiths; and producing high caliber NGOs and businesses:

> First in the bourgeoisie, the bourgeoisie is actually in Lebanon made of people who have come through the system of social mobility. They were either rich, and they become a little bit poorer, so they are bourgeois or they were very poor and they could [ascend] the ladder of society through education… So the bourgeoisie therefore in Lebanon is certainly an educated class. [Second, the bourgeoisie is] free in the sense that they are not bound by the traditions of the aristocracy or by complexes of the poor. [Third] they like to live and show off and display… This is part of our resistance so when people say well the Lebanese are too much show off; I think that the Lebanese tried to make the best of what they have... Then number four, I think that [within] the bourgeoisie you have a lot mixture between Christians and Muslims, because at this level you don't keep, you are not the

[18] Voting age in Lebanon is 21 although some proposals are being considered currently to lower the voting age to 18.

holder of traditions and you have to put a face as the rich would be, nor are you from the people who go by *dictat* of the religion and therefore have to abide [by it]. So there is more freedom in that sense and more identification and similarities especially when we meet at universities and in schools. And the fifth one is I think that the bourgeoisie has given us the best NGO members and even the [politicians] and the business people. It's the part of the country that is most alive. And that can [envision] a future and project progress.

d. The "Less Fortunate"

Living a good life is a Lebanese characteristic as Dibo explained, even among the less fortunate. Poverty rates have persisted in Lebanon at 28% since 1993 (earning $4 per day), while the rates for people in absolute poverty fluctuate around 8% (earning $2.40 per day) (Laithy et al. 2008). In Lebanon, the poverty level is set at approximately $618 earning per month for a family of five (to meet its food requirements and other basic needs such as health, education, housing and clothing); extreme poverty is set at $306 earning per month for a family of five (meeting only its food requirements) (Haddad 1996). Haddad (1996) suggests that "around one million Lebanese live in poverty, while 250,000 of them live in extreme poverty. In rural areas, 75% of families whose primary provider works in agriculture are poor, and 40% of these are extremely poor. Two thirds of the extremely poor - around 165,000 - live in rural areas and represent more than a quarter of the population in these areas. In urban centers, namely Beirut, Tripoli, Sidon, Tyre, Zahleh, and their suburbs, there are around 750,000 poor, around 90,000 of whom are extremely poor…" (Haddad 1996).

[19] Cultural sympathy.

The “less fortunate” are typically the uneducated poor families who receive financial support and services offered to them through philanthropic initiatives funded by the elites, and are offered their only educational opportunities by development projects that are parachuted into the country by international NGOs and foreign aid. Evidently, the Lebanese government is not a welfare state. To help alleviate poverty, the Lebanese state reinforces kinship power structures by earmarking pork barrel projects for regionally elected representatives. The government uses “temporary financial transfers, or transfers in kind, to establishing mechanisms entrusted with an empowering or developmental role” (Haddad 1996). Most of these establishments are either religious or private ones run by a one of the elites, especially Zoama politicians, who help the poor on a local level. For instance, the René Moawad Foundation (RMF), which is headed by former President Moawad’s widow PM Nayla Moawad, operates a health clinic for the poor in the Maronite town of Zgharta, which, as it happens, PM Moawad represents in the parliament. According to its website, “RMF's objectives focus on providing health services to the disadvantaged in North Lebanon. The services are centered in the community clinic in Zgharta. The clinic offers medical consultations, a laboratory, a pharmacy, a dental clinic and runs a mobile dispensary service.”[20] The Moawad Foundation receives financial and in-kind transfers from the Lebanese Ministries of Agriculture, Economy, Education, Environment, Public Health, and Labor among other national and international funders.[21]

[20] http://www.rmf.org.lb/main/main/default.html
[21] http://www.rmf.org.lb/pdf/2004letters&donors.pdf

The poor's kin groups do not provide their members with cultural or social capital, yet they still exercise a lot of control over them. In fact, working class rural families, or urban families of rural origin, are typically larger than the national average, ranging between 6.5 and 7 members. Their illiteracy rates are higher (For instance, according to RMF, the average illiteracy rate in the north is at 16.7% compared to the 11.6% national average; and for women it is 21.2% in the north compared to the 16% national average for women[22]). "Poverty places an additional burden on women and exacerbates discrimination against them. Thus, poor working women's salaries and incomes are lower than those of their male counterparts... Moreover, poor women and young girls are discriminated against regarding access to health care and nutrition" (Haddad 1996).

"The urban poor mainly belong to families whose primary provider works in the civil service (31% of which live below the absolute poverty line) or in industry (26% of which live below the absolute poverty line)" (Haddad 1996). Reluctance in increasing the public sector's salaries and wages is one of the main elements in the poverty problem in Lebanon, and a constant political issue. Public servants constitute 55% to 60% of the total work force in Lebanon. "The government has avoided raising salaries to alleviate poverty. Instead, it has accorded priority to controlling the money supply in order to reduce inflation, while arguing that this would improve the standard of living, especially among employees of the bloated and inefficient civil service" (Haddad 1996). According to Marguerite Helou Ph. D. from Syracuse University and Professor of International

Relations at the Lebanese University, many government employees who were previously middle class have slipped into poverty because they were never able to recover from the destruction of the war or were caught in the inflation of the 1990s.

> From the seventies on, you know one of the major impacts of the war, was that it did wipe [out] middle class in Lebanon. Okay? Like you have the same titles, the same position but if you look at the purchasing power of what they are earning, okay? The sum is base but does it really guarantee you a good standard of living, I am not talking about the highest upper standard of living, no… Another thing is, you know, the cost of food, etc. has gone up and the salaries have not gone up. Like we are promised a retroactive effect from 1996 to 2000 four years, each professor at the Lebanese university has about the minimum of 25 to 30 million L.L.[23] with the government which is not paying, it is not paying yet. And some people tell us you'll be lucky if you ever see it. Okay?

The categories above show that kin groups are highly differentiated in their usefulness to the individual according to class categories. While elite families provide their members with high status as a source of social capital, the intellectuals pass onto their children education as a source of cultural capital. Members of the middle class benefit from their extended kin groups in acquiring status, access and support in the public sphere, upon which I shall saw more about in the next chapter. However, member of less fortunate

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[22] http://www.rmf.org.lb/economy/overview/lebanon_facts.html

[23] At the exchange rate of 1500 LL for every US dollar, the government owes its public university professors about $20,000 partial annual salaries that were not paid for a period of four years due to the government's budget deficit.

families inherit their families' negative capital and their stigmatization, along with many other challenges to overcome.

3. CONFESSIONAL SYSTEM

If the family represents the nucleus of Lebanese society, then confessions represent its major schism. Within the two major camps of Muslims and Christians, many groupings aggregate around central figures that hold a high status in these small communities either through traditional or rational sources of power (speaking in the Weberian sense). Lebanese democracy is merely a system of confessional allocations, and it is entirely governed from within by each group's fear of elimination, rather than any tacitly recognized sense of coexistence. This religion-based division legitimates a quasi-feudal system of stratification based on the family's socioeconomic status within the confession.

The Lebanese state is divided evenly between Christians and Muslims although this division is symbolic rather than representative of the actual proportions of the population. Since the civil wars, the population growth of the Shiite community and the continuous emigration of able young men to Europe, the Americas, Australia and the Gulf have left the threatened Christian minorities fearful. As demographics have shifted the religious composition of the country, the formerly disenfranchised Shiite sector has attained symbolic equal power and influence throughout the country. This fear drives traditional Christian authorities to oppose civil marriage and women's right to transfer their citizenship onto their children: "The confessional structure, especially among the Christians, creates a fear that Lebanese women would marry non-Lebanese men from the

other confessions… therefore the demographic equilibrium would be more imbalanced than it is now or it has been before" (according to my interview with Chakhtoura).

Separating politics from patriarchy and religion is alien to Lebanese society in particular and Arab culture in general. In fact, Younan feels that the family, rather than the individual, is the principle agent responsible for maintaining the political system:

> The family is within the confession. The family has the final say in who it desires as a political representative and whom to nominate. People go to the Maronite Patriarch or the Sheikh to get his blessing. The confessional authorities know the reputable families and they reward them for donating to the confession, for being believers and for being loyal advocates for the confession. These are the same ones who bring pride to their family names. Those would never propose social or political change; they are there to reinforce traditional forces and to protect the confession's share of power.

Especially after the civil war, the struggle for existence has led sects to grab a bigger share of the political pie. The further confessions engrave their jurisdiction over their subject, the stronger they become. With their strong base comes the ability to mobilize and draw attention to their political clout. Mattar gives an idiosyncratic example that demonstrates the ability of religious leaders to mobilize the masses. Choosing a general subject like inflation, she posits that if both women's rights organizations and religious institutions call for a protest against inflation, the former would draw 200 women, whereas the latter would attract at least 2000 people!

In answering my question on whether the Lebanese/Arabic culture or the Islamic civilization is responsible for hindering women's participation in public life, Beydoun, a Shiite, makes the following nuanced response: "Our political system is patriarchal and male-dominated and family-centered… There are certain ideologies, sure. But people's interests control the Lebanese system. In terms of Islamic ideologies, do you feel that our Christian ideologies are westernized or western? They are more Islamic than the Muslims themselves." Similarly, Ma□tre Mary Rose Zalzal, a Maronite, feels that the source of restrictions on women's rights is not Islam in particular or religion in general. Rather, she feels that women's control over economic resources is the major indicator of the ability and willingness among the working class women to fight for their rights. These answers resonate with Charrad's assertion that "Like other world religions, Islam offers many possible interpretations and systems of meaning… In Islamic texts, arguments exist both for and against legal innovation" (Charrad 2007b: 1519).

We usually talk about kinship in abstract to refer to the extended structure of family, but my data shows that not all extended kinship relations are the same. My findings suggest that kinship is not unilaterally shaped by religion or class in Lebanon; instead, there exists a mutually determining relationship between kinship, confessionalism, community origin and social status. These factors go into the degree of one's social capital, which can serve as an incentive to explain positioning within religious, class or kinship networks and their coordination. In the next section, I show how gender identity and women's rights and responsibilities are operationalized within the context of their

families. I will show that by fulfilling their responsibilities in their families and enjoying the rights they are ensured by them through, women contribute to the maintenance of the kinship system and the "kin contract" (Joseph and Slyomovics 2001).

D. Gender Identities, Rights and Responsibilities

In this section I argue that women's pursuit of femininity is sanctioned by men and women in the Lebanese society and serve as the bases for division of labor in the family. This hegemonic belief is manifested in the way women conceive of their bodies and identity, giving priority to the fulfillment of their domestic responsibilities and viewing educational attainment in the light of this overriding goal.

1. GENDER IDENTITY

A peek at how gender identities are constructed and maintained will give the reader a vivid image of how Lebanese women's rights and responsibilities are typically determined.

Gender identities in Lebanon are greatly centered on the pursuit of femininity. Women are rewarded for their feminine appearance and conduct. For instance, in 2000, Lebanon ranked fourth (85 per 100,000 people)[24] in the number of plastic surgery procedures performed per capita. Beauty pageants have been held in Lebanon since 1960; and in 1971, the Lebanese Georgina Rizk won Miss Universe. Lebanese contestants to Miss Universe reached top ten in 1962 and 1973 and top ten or fifteen in 1974, 1975, 1997 and

[24] Switzerland comes in first at a rate of 214.621 per 100,000 people, Cyprus second at 185.738, Spain third at 99.561 and the United States is number 19th at 30.768. Source:"International Society of Aesthetic Plastic Surgery", Retrieved (http://www.isaps.org/Stats2002Res.asp).

2003 to Miss World; and Christine Sawaya won Miss International contest in 2002.[25] The meaning of this femininity is not, according to Sunni Ma□tre Iqbal Dughan, that Lebanese women are adopting women's rights, along with other aspects of modernity: "Don't be fooled by the way we dress up and show off and do Botox and plastic surgeries, this is all bogus." Beauty pageants are viewed by feminists in both the West and in Lebanon as the opposite of liberation of women's rights (See for instance Hansen and Reed 1986; Hollows 2000; Lambert 1995). It can be argued that this sexualization of women's bodies is sexism at its worst! Although some might thinks that fashion could be interpreted as women's rights because it is sexy, Dughan is well aware, and in agreement with Western feminists, that the opposite if in fact true.

Women are complemented with "gentle" treatment in reward for their "delicate" behavior. Amal Dibo felt that women in Lebanon "can have it easily." They "had their rights without fighting," because men never fought them back. On the contrary, according to Dibo:

> Men have not resisted any of the women's demands as long as women [remained as they] were.—We have been very unhappy about this kind of approach that men have to women—admiring them, telling them that they love them and that they like them, they are interested in them. If a woman says okay but I want this, he would say (تكرم عينيك *for your eyes' sake*) you can have it… it is a relaxed

[25] Egypt is the only other Arab country that participates in international beauty pageant competitions.

> atmosphere, there is no real conflict. Except when really, conflicts are there. And this is at the level of divorce.

The belief system, in which this delicate treatment is assumed, is common not just to men, but also to women, and even to activists. One activist described girls as "delicate in their nature." She proudly claims that her daughter is spoiled, pampered, and inexperienced. The image of women as being naturally pure and powerlessness is not particular to just Lebanon or Middle Eastern cultures – it is an attitude that crops up wherever patriarchy is found. Purity and sheltering are two assumptions among the many in the set of gender beliefs to which some Lebanese women more or less ascribe.

Generally, there is a sense of superiority shared by Lebanese women vis-à-vis women in other Arab countries; there is a widespread belief that Christians in particular are responsible for this enhanced status. When comparing Lebanese women to other Arab women, most respondents confirmed that while Lebanese women are not necessarily "freer" than women in other Arab countries, but they are more comfortable within the culture and had more opportunities. Some attribute Lebanese women's image to their lack of deprivation. Shiite Lawyer Rana Chamseddine believes that "The Lebanese woman lives in her own world… not that she enjoys rights, but that she is comfortable in her status. Her main concerns are going out and enjoying life. And her life is beautiful here although I admit that not all women think this way. But women here do not feel deprived or dismissed, therefore they don't strive to be somebody."

This feeling of liberation is also due to the advancement that Lebanese women have made in fashion, arts, entertainment and the business industries. Lebanese women have a large degree of freedom in choosing what they wear or how they will live their lives. Younan feels that young college women wear the most revealing and exposing clothes, yet they "are traditional in their mentality. The discrepancy is scary. Their progress is slow and the roots of this problem are in their upbringing, which traditionally shields them from reasoning." We can infer from these examples that there is tremendous pressure on women to maintain their gendered representation in public.

2. FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES

The gendered public representation of women is played out in their care-giving responsibilities and the roles they play—as daughters and wives but most importantly as mothers, which takes precedent in women's lives. Alamedine points, in her remarks, to one perception of this role: "Because a woman is born and grows up giving. She gives before she thinks to take. There is always this devotion you are giving, you have to give." Joseph (2000) suggests the existence of a "hidden hegemonic civic myth" –the myth of extended kinship. She argues that kinship has contributed to disenfranchising women through a complex and paradoxical "care/control" paradigm that is sustained by the state and religious sects. To Joseph, extended kinship rather than the sectarian pluralist system of governance is central to gender inequality in Lebanon. She suggests that kinship can only be challenged when the "care/control" paradigm is weakened. Yet, disengaging the care/control paradigm and suspending the hidden hegemonic civic myth require widely shared awareness among all segments of society and that is currently missing. According

to Said, “Our society convinces the woman that she only is responsible for it and that the man does not share this responsibility by saying that the house is her ornamented kingdom. So the woman becomes exhausted from fulfilling her domestic duties and working outside the home.”

From my fieldnotes and the stories I heard from my respondents and the general public, I have inferred that Joseph’s ‘hidden hegemonic civic myth’ is a story or a general understanding that women’s main role in the society is found in the family, to which all her other roles are complementary and thus nonessential. Should a woman choose an unconventional path, i.e. not to marry, or if married not to have children; or if she decides to pursue divorce from an unhappy marriage, then she steps outside the conventions and forsakes the protection of the family. The woman who stays within the circumference of the family circle, which is designed to simultaneously restrict her and protect her, can enjoy (to the extent that circumstances permit) the benefits and protection of this design.[26] However, should the woman step outside this circle and these boundaries, she is made to pay the price. Overall, citadin families allowed more leeway to women to structure how they wanted to provide care than did families from the Dahhiya or the village. Relations varied per different couples, limiting the ability to generalize in this

[26] Historically, this protection was decisively broken for many women during war times Joseph, Suad. 2004. "Conceiving Family Relationships in Post-War Lebanon." *Journal of Comparative Family Studies* 35:271-293.. Even as recently as the 2006, Usta, Farver and Zein Usta, Jinan, Jo Ann M. Farver, and Lama Zein. 2008. "Women, war, and violence: surviving the experience." *Journal of Women’s Health* 17:793-804. show that During armed conflict, domestic violence is also likely to increase. Of the 310 participants in their study: 27% reported at least one incident of domestic abuse during the conflict, and 13% reported at least one incident after the conflict perpetrated by their husbands or other family members.

study due to the small sample of my data. However, especially in regards to their non-motherly-related care responsibilities, the city was easier on the women.

In their natal families, women have fewer responsibilities and restrictions than in their marital families. In fact, most laws give women greater freedom as "daughters" rather than as mothers or wives (Shehadeh 1998). However, daughters are still expected to be obedient and chaste. The parameters of obedience and chastity limit the daughters' movement and freedom in many ways. Beydoun admits that, as a young "average looking" woman her stepfather enforced a 5 pm curfew on when she needed to be home. Likewise, Chamesdine, who is a thirty-year old lawyer, explains:

> My father finds it unacceptable for me to be flirting on the phone with a man for instance or for a man to come visit me at home. If someone shows up suddenly, it is also unacceptable for me to sit alone with him in a room. He does not accept these practices; he might invite this man and me to sit with them in the family room. We are still relatively conservative.

Brothers are expected to watch out for their sister's safety and wellbeing (Joseph 1994). Said tells a story of when her brother saw her sitting on bus next to a boy and being playful at the age of 13. She was on her way with the scouts to a field trip. He immediately assumed a love story going on between the two of them, so he threatened her by saying: "come with me to the house." But she told him, "no I am going with on a fieldtrip with the scouts." He said "no, you are coming home with me." She said "I am not going home with you and you have no business telling me what to do. Besides, baba

(daddy) is the only one who tells me if I should come home." After a long argument he threatened to hit her, to which she replied "I would hit you back in front of all the people." He then said: "Okay I am going to tell baba." This is a small sequence reflecting the everyday control that brothers exercise over their sisters.

In exchange for being subject to this kind of protection enacted by the male members of the family, daughters have the responsibility to render everyday in-kind services to them and to other family members. Said's mother expected all her girls to do tasks for their brothers "When my mother would tell my older sister Samo to iron my brother's shirt because it was not ironed properly, she would do it. If she asked me, I would gaze at her and say: If he doesn't like the way it is ironed, then let him iron it himself!"

The gendered service ethos is also about caring for other members of the family. Chamesdine explains that as a capable member of her family, her wise management was mainly responsible for saving it from a catastrophe when her mother fell ill:

> Chamedine: My mother went through a very difficult depression and she suffered a lot. So the house was about to fall apart. Honestly, she reached a point, I don't know, when she was totally unconscious and hallucinating and all. We only had one solution, either to be united as a family (*aila*) or disperse. Who was to assume the responsibility in these conditions? Of course, me, the girl, because the boys could not move in such conditions, they were lost. My father was supportive and my younger brother used to help me with house chores. I helped my mother and at the same time I took care of the boys.

Spousal duties include management of the household, fulfillment of the family's social obligations and responsibility for marital happiness, the kind of thing sociologist Arlie Hochschild (1983) calls "emotional labor." The story of Laure Moghaizel is a great example of how she saw no contradiction between herself as a champion of women's rights and as a woman who could devote special efforts to invest in her marriage. Laure was traditional in her perception of her role as a wife and mother. As a wife, Laure prepared her husband's coffee in the morning. And although they practiced law together, she often returned home first from their law office in order to greet him with flowers. She insisted that their house was exceptional because Joseph was her constant "guest of honor" according to Amal Dibo. Her son, Fadi, felt that "Oh she was a wife as [good] probably as others and very better than other wives…"

Spousal responsibilities normally center on house chores toward which respondents varied in their attitudes. For some, the level of their husbands' participation in fulfilling domestic roles was satisfying. Nassar, Said and Nassrallah were pleased to have their husbands' help; for instance Nassar says, "He used to help me also. Sometimes he would see me very overwhelmed, he would take things into his own hands. I owe it to my husband." The husband's accommodation of their competing commitments released these women from feeling guilty should they not fulfill their spousal duties completely. Said explains that "As I respond to my political duties, I have no time to cook. I come home and find food, my husband cooks."

Others did not have high expectations of their husbands but did not necessarily resent their inability to help. Majed for instance, excused her husband's helplessness in house chores: "…although my husband supported and helped me, he would help wash dishes or lift heavy items. But with the babies? It is not possible for him to prepare a bottle, he just does not know. You know, it is not his job. He would get confused because he was not used to this, so I did not blame him." Shiite Professor Fadia Hoteit felt that the division of labor was reasonable and that her domestic responsibilities were rewarded in her marriage. "My husband provided me with security. No matter what happens, I know that my husband will take the majority of the responsibility on his shoulders. Therefore, I am comfortable with this idea. I gained from it. Okay, I clean and cook and serve, but in return, I also get benefits. I do not want to achieve equality with my husband at the price of losing this protection."

Alternatively, others felt the squeeze of the inequality impinge on their relationships. But they did not necessarily feel the need to break away from their marriage. For instance, when Lamia Rustum Shehadeh and her husband were studying at Harvard in the United States, she did not embody women's liberation on the personal level. She assumed the full responsibility for her house and marriage, "I did not have this idea of freedom, it wasn't there. My husband did not touch a thing, I used to cook, teach and study." Alamedine would quarrel with her husband over shopping, often telling him that "on your way back from work, you can pass and buy some items, it is not a big problem, but why do I have to always do the shopping?" Rabab as-Sadr admits that although her husband is very supportive, as a distinguished public figure herself, "I would not change a thing at

home. Sometimes, I forfeit my rights, I sacrificed so this family (aila) continues being happy, successful and peaceful, and my children are blessed, thank God." Finally, Fayad ended her marriage with divorce, because she felt that she could no longer continue promoting a public image of a happy couple: "I don't like to have two faces. Inside the house there was nothing left between us except tension, and we were not good actors, so we could not put on a show for people. It was psychologically better for both of us. Now it is much better, we are good friends, in fact I had dinner with him the other day. Sometimes my young son complains and says that we are not a family (aila). I tell him that we are indeed one, and that we love each other and we choose the best for each other. I support my husband and if I am in need, he too supports me." Of course, these testimonies come from too small a set to allow for generalization over all Lebanese relationships. Yet they do articulate the range of relationships among many women who identify with many feminist goals.

Generally speaking, the cases that I present do not indicate that belonging to a specific religion or living in a specific area guarantees automatic acquisition of women's rights in any of the areas defined by Laure Moghaizel: political rights, legal competency, economic and social rights, punitive laws, and the Personal Status law. There is a general consensus that women are expected to fulfill their domestic duty to the fullest and they are adamant about it. In order to manage private and public responsibilities, many activists rely on the support of other female kin members who permit them enough of a release from their domestic duties to engage in public service. This support did not only come from the "mother" as typically expected; other female kin members were

mentioned, such as the grandmother, aunts, mother-in-law, etc. Additionally, the majority of my respondents had foreign maids either on full time or part time basis.

Today, the availability of affordable domestic servants, who earn a monthly income ranging from $150 to $500, has led to a proliferation of foreign domestic workers in Lebanon. According to the Labor Ministry, about 250,000 migrant workers reside in Lebanon (Tabar 2008). For a country of four million, the ratio of Lebanese to foreign maids would be about 16 to 1. This rate is definitely lower in the village, where female family members perform most of the house chores, whereas the rate is much higher among well-to-do citadin families, who often have two or more maids.

The impact of domestic service is tremendous; people now bluntly ask whether a woman has help at home, and whether this person is from the Philippines or Sri Lanka. Maids come from various South Asian and African countries, although having an educated Philippina as a maid is an indication of a higher social status. Alamedine describes how the maid became an indication of status. People “place” other people by asking questions that demonstrate the order of factors making up status in the following way: Are you related to so and so, which region are you from, where do you live, and then, do you have help at home. They ask these questions to learn your social status and class. She says that they ask these questions “to draw an image of me and figure out how they are going to classify me.”

This domestic service phenomenon has freed women of middle and upper class families from having to perform their domestic chores, especially those entailed by the demands of their husbands and their natal families. Women now solicit the help of their maids to do shopping, cleaning and cooking. Inside the home, domestic help has changed the cultural norms and expectation of middle and upper class young women. Young girls are no longer expected to assume any domestic responsibilities, not even to serve themselves. The example below is a clear example of how an activist, Lina Alamedine, deals with this issue with her own daughter at home:

> Stephan: Do you feel that the society allows or compel girl to be like mint leaves [delicate/pampered/spoiled (نعنوعين)]?
>
> Alamedine: No no. They are all delicate because we spoil them in raising them. My daughter gets her glass of water brought to her bedside. She would yell to bring it to her. Once, I yelled at her and asked her to politely say: please wash my garment. I told her that it was her responsibility to wash it and that she should not order us to do it. She asked "how do I wash?" This was the big question "how and where and what do you mean by washing." And what is a washing bowl? What a language! You know? We created this, we did this.

Motherly duties come as the absolute first priority to all Lebanese women, consuming much of the time of those with children, and are exercised without question. Mothers take pride in sacrificing absolutely anything for the sake of their children. The majority of the activists and female politicians I interviewed found it outrageous to even question their motherly duties, which are socially imposed, but most also self-assigned. Maronite

Caroline Slaibi, who studied families and couples for her Master thesis, observes:

> Our upbringing in Lebanon emphasizes the role of the mother as the guardian of the family. She believes that if she does not guard the family and pay attention to it, it would fall apart. Therefore, it got in her head that the family is her responsibility. So when a woman demands her rights to divorce for instance, the society labels her as "unchaste woman" because she left her family and paid attention to herself. She herself partly feels that, in contrast to the West. She feels responsible for maintaining family bonds.

Asserting Slaibi's theory, Fakhry believes that the woman bares the responsibility for building a family: "It is my personal belief that the woman must, must, must succeed in building a healthy family. If she reaches a stage where she cannot balance, then having a family is more important than working. This is my personal belief."

Some feel that this sacrifice is temporary until the children grow up. In fact, my interviewees did not feel deprived for sacrificing their career temporarily. "The woman," as Sadr puts it, "is a human being like the man. She has responsibilities in life. So during certain periods in her life, she cannot play a big role because her priorities are her little children. As long as the children are little, they come first. When they are older, they take their own path; then she goes back on her own path." Without being apologetic, Hoteit admits that she, among others, accepts a temporary interruption in her dreams for the sake of the children:

> We are used to this ideology, and my personal belief is this. I even know that my

> daughter is excelling and studious and has a scholarship. But, in my mind, if she bears children it is okay for her to stop for a bit. It will be okay for the sake of the children. I don't feel that you must balance the two. If you weigh this and weigh that, I feel that the children are always the winner, because you are not losing your career, you are just losing two, three or five years. Okay, so what?

To free themselves from the self-imposed duty of sacrificing their time to their maternal responsibilities, women are choosing to have smaller families. Overall, all but one activist had 4 or fewer children, with 9 of those from the city having two children or one child. Among activists from the village, also 9 had two children or one child, and only one from al-Dahhiya had two children.

Table 5: Number of Activists' Children by Community Origin

	Urban	Rural	Dahhiya
0	3	2	0
1	2	0	0
2	4	7	1
3	3	1	2
4	3	0	1
6	0	1	0

While the sample given by my subjects is small and non-random to form a base for generalizations, the trend is clear that women activists have smaller families than the previous generation; rarely did I see families larger than 4, and none of them had 9 or 10 children as their parents did. The UN National Human Development Report estimated

Lebanon's total Fertility Rates (births per woman) between 1950 and 1955 at 5.74; reaching between 1960 and 1965 its highest rate of 6.36 but declining to 4.92 in 1970 and hitting a low of 3.79 in 1998 and another low of 3.09 in 1990. In 2000 fertility rates were at 2.3 and were maintained at 2.1 since 2005, according to the *World Population Prospects of the United Nations* in 1998 (UNDP 1998).GenderStats reports that Lebanon's fertility rates were higher than comparable countries in the upper middle income brackets, where the fertility rate is at 2.0, but lower than other Middle Eastern countries, where fertility rates are at 3.0 in 2005 (Genderstats).[27]

About 42% of citadin activists were born to families in which there were more than 4 children; 70% were born into such families among activists with village affiliations; and among those from al-Dahhiya, the figure is 75%. However, activists and politicians from all three groups had families with nine to ten children. Interestingly, of the seven families with eight or more children, three are Christian (from Rural and Dahhiya), two are urban Sunnis, and two Shiites (one urban and one from Dahhiya).

Table 6: Number of Children in Activists' Natal Family

	Urban	Rural	Dahhiya
2	1	1	0
3-4	6	2	1
5-6	2	5	1
7-8	1 (8-Sunni)	1 (8-Christian)	1 (8-Shiite)
9-10	1 (10- Shiite)	1 (10- Christian)	1 (9-Christian)
11-13	1 (13- Sunni)	0	0

[27] See also Badran, Hoda. 2008, "Major Trends Affecting Families: El Mashrek El Araby", Retrieved (http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/family/Publications/mtbadran.pdf).

In terms of family size, influenced by global demographic trends, my initial expectations were that Christians would have smaller families than Muslims and that citadins would have smaller families than villagers. I discovered that the divisions were actually generational. Having smaller families is an indication of the progressive attitude taken by and towards women in a given milieu. It is not the cause. Rather, it comes about as the result of various other social factors, which usually include migration to the city and higher levels of education.

3. EDUCATION IS A WOMEN'S RIGHT

The most important aspect of public-participation rights controlled by the family is education. Overall, Lebanese families are committed to educating their daughters (Lattouf 2004). This may be traced back in Lebanon's history to the influence of the evangelical activity in the field of girls' education since the early 1800 (Fleischmann 2003; see also Woodberry forthcoming). The dominant discourse in the Arab world has emphasized that women's liberation can only be achieved through self-emancipation and education. "Families [in Lebanon] educated their daughters," according to Lattouf, "so that their choice of a husband could be elevated socially and financially" (2004: 17). Just as there is a widespread belief across ideologies in the West that class inequality can be ameliorated most efficiently through education, the Lebanese feel that gender equality can be achieved through providing women access to education.

The most educated women were those who descended from intellectual families and the "bourgeois" class. Although women's education was desired among the upper class

elites, it was not deemed necessary. Working class women often faced intense resistance from their families in trying to pursue an education. Combining the two factors of community origin and social status, we find, not surprisingly, that middle and upper citadin had the most opportunities while poorer women from the village and al-Dahhiya had the toughest times. Afifa al-Said is a middle class citadin who pursued her college education after her children had gone on to school. She explains that when she chose her husband at age of 17, her father objected because he wanted her to continue her studies:

> Baba wanted me to study. I told him that no, I want to marry him. So my father made my husband promise him that I would continue my education. When I got married, I got pregnant and had one child and then a second right away so it was not possible for me to study. When we came back to Lebanon from Jordan, after my husband left his pilot job with the Jordanian airlines, he remembered his promise to my dad and told me "you have to go to college" and I had already decided to do so anyway, so I enrolled when we lived in Paris. It was the right opportunity for me.

Intellectuals, even from the village, affirm that their families have had an influence on raising their consciousness, as is apparent in Beydoun's response to my question:

> Stephan: Had you been raised in a different house, do you think the same…
>
> Beydoun: I cannot say. I later paid attention. Of course when you are young, you think that the whole world is like you. As you grow, you start noticing that no. I am sure my family had an impact; the impact was because my *ahl* (parents) were

> concerned with public issues. When this happens, you have to have social consciousness. There is the issue of social responsibility and citizenship.

The scenario was different for families in traditional leadership positions in the village. For Princess Arslan, who spent most of her life in the Druze mountains, many hurdles made her decision to go back to school very hard. These problems rose from the alleged conflict between her pursuit of education and her role as a mother, which holds supremacy over all other matters in Lebanese culture. I asked Princess Arslan if someone gave her support in her quest to get her Bachelor degree in Political Science (she later pursued a Masters degree in history). She responded:

> No one, you should see how I did that. I wanted to go back to school and my husband got crazy: "how you want to leave your house and family and go to school, you are not a baby"… he said "go see who will pay your tuition." I wasn't working at the time... my father knew of it, my father was the rich person but he told me, "How will you go back to college? How about your children, your house, your family (*aila*)?"

Also in the village, family's attitudes toward their daughter's education were the worst among working class families. Slaibi indicates that her father opposed girls' education and was against her leaving the village to pursue her college education:

> Stephan: Did your family support you in your college education?
>
> Slaibi: Ahli?
>
> Stephan: Eh.

Slaibi: My father was not supportive but my mom was because for my father, we were living in Becharri, and why would I go to Beirut to study?

Stephan: Did your siblings continue their education?

Slaibi: My older brothers became engaged in warfare, and therefore they did not confront him. For him if a boy wants to continue his education it was not a problem… So I went down to Beirut. I had friends and we lived together and I studied. I did not take money from him because I was working and taking care of myself. If I was going to revolt, I could not take money from him…

Families' attitudes toward education were less confrontational for al-Dahhiya residents and more positive in the city. In al-Dahhiya, families did not value girls' education in particular, as in one case of an activist, who resents her father's lack of commitment to educating his children. "If we did not study," she recounted, "he would yell at us, but he never knew what a learning environment was. You have to give children a learning environment at home. It is not just about putting them in school. He thinks that he fulfilled his responsibilities towards us when he enrolled us in school. My sister studied more than I did and so did my brothers, but I couldn't because the environment affected me." In Beirut, while Chakhtoura did pursue a teaching certificate after high school, her family was not encouraging. In our conversation she indicated that most of the discouragements she received were in the form of jokes: "Encourage me? No one in my family encouraged me. My father used to joke with me saying, 'why are you studying? You will get married one day and have kids. Do people study for the kitchen?'" Likewise, Younan feels that her household was not ideal for learning. She did not have

books in the house and her parents did not expect her to pursue her dreams beyond getting a college education.

The majority of the women, especially from middle and intellectual class families, indicated that their mothers' insistence on educating their daughters played a strong role in affecting their educational outcomes. For instance, Laure's mother, Labiba, urged her daughters to study beyond the Baccalaureate and to attend the university in spite of the fact that, at this time, college education was mainly limited to wealthy women. For Fakhry, her mother's support was not limited to encouragement in educational attainment, but also included relief from domestic responsibilities despite being a Shiite family from al-Dahhiya:

> Fakhry: … My mother for instance would never think to delegate housework to me or my sisters. She would say, I only want you to study and succeed… In fact, I only learned how to iron after several years of being married. Never, never, we knew housework but we were never asked to deliver these services, never.
>
> Stephan: why in your opinion?
>
> Fakhry: She had tremendous care and interest in her children's education.
>
> Stephan: Was she deprived of education?
>
> Fakhry: She married early when she was 14 years old.
>
> Stephan: So she did not study.
>
> Fakhry: But she was smart and had a lot of wit, and so she wanted us to study. It is normal that a mature person like her would appreciate knowledge and education.

Even in the village when no one would support Princess Arslan in her educational pursuit, her mother's advice was to act silently: "My mother is always on my side but she didn't have her say with my father. Still, she used to encourage me, 'do whatever you want my daughter, do whatever you want.'"

In this section I discussed women's gender identity and the assumptions on which it is constructed. I have concentrated on the relation between certain perceptions and standards of superiority and entitlement that go into the image of femininity in Lebanon, and how these act to promote and hinder women's equality. These feminine identities serve as the base for women assuming the main responsibility for the private sphere as women's own kingdom. They play subordinate roles as daughters, wives and mothers. The latter of those roles takes precedent over all other social engagements. This leads us to the issue of rights. I show how rights, broadly construed as being essentially realized by opportunities, are granted by the family to women, mainly education. I have shown that education varies tremendously by community origin and social status, but not by religion.

E. Conclusion

In this chapter, I have offered an empirical analysis of kinship in Lebanon. I discussed approaches to understanding family membership in the sociological literature. Following in that tradition, I gave a thorough description of family types to define my independent variable, kinship. The description serves to introduce the reader to the significance of

kinship in Lebanese society and Arabic culture. I applied various approaches to defining and categorizing how membership is determined in the family, using my observations to extract, from the testimony of my interviewees, the terms and perceptions common to the Lebanese practice of everyday family life. I reshuffled primary, secondary, tertiary kin memberships into five new categories: nuclear family, natal kin, marital kin, cousins and symbolic kin or relatives. These five categories, which are data driven, reflect family relationships that I observed in Lebanon.

The second major theme in this chapter is the acquisition of social capital through the extended kinship structure and networks. I showed that acquiring social capital is influenced by kin groups' social status, community origin, and confessional connection. I classified family relations by community origin and affiliation with the city, the village, or al-Dahhiya suburb. Using this typology, I explored how family relationships and networks are mediated by the family's community of origin, and in turn reinforce cultural norms of that community. Finally, I showed how these factors come together to partially determine the rights and opportunities to an equal say in the running of the household, education, and marriage or partner choice afforded to family members, especially women. In general, urban Lebanese women feel that they enjoy more rights than other Lebanese women, while Christians assume that they have more rights than Muslim women. However, according to the law, women are relatively similar in their treatment under various types of civil and family law. However, here I would like to discuss rights in the broader sense of real opportunities to participate in public life.

I also examined social capital within the context of kinship, confessionalism and class. None of these social systems exists in segregation from the other two, especially in the Middle East and Lebanon. I explored how the position of women in the velvet elite society guaranteed them access to power but restricted their freedoms. Intellectual and middle class women are most likely to be change agents, especially the citadins. However, in regards to religion, I concluded that women fight similar battles despite their different religious beliefs or association. Finally, I explained the hegemonic emphasis on femininity as a factor in influencing Lebanese women's aspiration to become wives and mothers, which they learn through their formal education and informal socialization.

In this chapter, I showed that the strength of the nuclear family structure is bound up with the dynamics of kin groups' social status and religion, so that Lebanese women must negotiate the boundaries and identities imposed by both. I suggested that we cannot speak of Lebanese women's status per se, and in fact Lebanese women are differentiated based on their place of residence as well as their social status. And finally, we learned that the responsibilities that women fulfill towards their kin groups and the rights which they are guaranteed are restrictive, often consensual and dynamic.

Although the kinship system is beneficial on the individual level, it is also restrictive. This patriarchal, hierarchical and extended institution (Barakat 1993) has given large kin groups relative dominance over the social, economic and political aspects of life. The differentiated settings of social status and community origin in the Lebanese society impact the hegemonic discourse on women's rights and responsibilities within the

kinship system. Less advantaged kin groups, especially in the village and the suburbs, do not provide their members, especially women, with educational opportunities or empowering networks and resources, yet they still exercise a lot of control over them. Additionally, the hegemonic civic myth of kinship has placed unrealistic and unfair expectations of the way women's bodies are sexualized. It has also constrained women's rights by emphasizing their roles as mothers and daughters over their individualism, and it placed expectations on them to fulfill domestic responsibilities associated with these roles.

How will I use the categories I developed and how do they connect to activism in the next chapter? Throughout this study, I will use the membership terms I introduced in this chapter to explain the complex family relations as they are mentioned by my respondents. Second, I will show in the next chapter the impact of the urban-rural paradigm on women's propensity to become civically engaged. Throughout the dissertation we will witness the challenges and rewards that membership in a particular class bestows on women in their relationship to the movement, other activists, constituents and policymakers. The concept of Mahsoubieh becomes especially relevant as women attempt to gain access to politicians, which is evident in Chapter six. And finally, the kinship contract that both women and men honor as a gentle code of conduct explains the logic behind women's inclination to define their activism within the parameter of their kinship system.

CHAPTER FOUR: BECOMING AN ACTIVIST

A. Introduction

What motivates Lebanese women to become activists? Since my research is about Lebanese society, which is highly kin-based, a question deriving from the embeddedness approach is: how does embeddedness in the nuclear and extended family structure encourage or discourage women to become activists? Whether family members directly encourage activists or not, I argue that the family plays a significant role in influencing women's activism. In this chapter, I examine how families help prepare and support women as they take on activist roles in the women's rights movement. I also examine the manners by which extended kin groups with enabling resources provide activists with reputable name and recognized social status to garner constituents' support in the public sphere and gain access to decision-makers. While for some women, family may present a set of obstacles to emancipation, for other women, it is the vehicle to emancipation.

This chapter presents both cultural and pragmatic perspectives by discussing varying mixes of kinship relationships—nuclear family, natal kin, marital kin, the extended kin—are important determinants in shaping Lebanese women's journeys to activism. I discuss embedded and autonomous approaches to activists' personal transformation to a life of activism. The data that informs this chapter are retrieved from interviews with women activists as they describe their own experiences.

While a few Lebanese women I surveyed entered the movement directly by joining a

women's organization, most of them came through participation in other forms of public service. Most attribute their beginnings to having a general interest in social justice and public affairs since their youth. Some traced this interest to involvement in public education, high school student protests, college student organizations, university newspaper, or even vocational training. Others came to the women's movement after participating in human rights organizations, rural development governmental organizations, political parties, professional syndicates, and charity groups like Abbé Pierre's Catholic Compagnons d'Emmaüs.

A number of activists indicated their beginnings to the awareness of public affairs that they received at home during childhood. The story of Sunni Ma□tre Iqbal Dughan's beginnings resonated among a number of activists who shared similar experiences:

> I was a 13 year old girl, very very young when I began to become aware of my aunts who came from Palestine as displaced refugees. One of them was even in the Ramlah. Although Ramlah was given to the Arabs during the partition, it was given back to the Israelis as a gift. She came only with the clothes she had on her. My father brought her from Tyre. She was exhausted with her children. This scene changed my life forever. I say: How much collective injustice was committed towards the Palestinians. The entire world must be held accountable. Since then, any issue relating to Palestine impacts me. At 12 or 13, the Arab Nationalist Movement contacted me and I joined them.

Similarly, Maronite Parliamentary Member Nayla Moawad's mother was a Palestinian of French descent. Her family was among the largest and most renowned kin groups in

Palestine but they all became displaced when Israel was founded. Although this study is not about the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, a number of the activists felt that this conflict has touched their personal lives, whether by displacing family members or affecting the economic and social welfare of their southern towns after the closure of the border with the newly founded Israeli state in 1948.

As Dughan's and other descriptions of the impact of family on raising consciousness and awareness of social injustice implies, women can gain empowerment and support from both their nuclear and extended family. The nuclear family played a role in raising activists' consciousness of their social world, and instilling principles of tolerance and patriotism. The extended family provided these women with a name that defines their status, credibility and networks. While I would classify several of the activists I interviewed as embedded in their kinship structure and processes, some did pursue autonomous means distinct from their kin groups and connections as they participated in collective and political action.

In the following, I investigate what social and feminist movement scholars have said about how and why actors join a movement and how they view the family's contribution to influencing the individual's decision to become an activist. First, I examine whether the family can be classified as an appropriate space to carry out one's activism. Social movement scholars posit that by constructing autonomous social space, social movements happen exclusively outside traditional realms, such as the family. Although Weber pointed to the relevance of the family in influencing social status and on the

family's role in solidifying social and political relations in certain societies, the literature on social movements has endlessly mentioned the need for modern collective action to develop a level of autonomous social and political spaces within civil society (Cohen 1985; Melucci 1994; Tarrow 1996; Tilly 1999). Yet studies that take non-western and non-traditional approach to studying social movements, find that the family provided free spaces for African-American activists (Evans and Boyte 1986); and that kinship ties as well sexual and affectual relations were influential for the Huk rebellion in defeating the community party in the Philippines (Goodwin 1997); and even in many cases in Latin America. The family has also been discussed in the literature on women's movements, I note especially exceptions include the Glickman (1993), Joseph and Lewis (1986), Baker and Kline (1996) as studies that have given attention to the family's positive influence on feminists.

Since feminist movements are a subset of social movements, I initially approached the literature on the two with the expectation that they would overlap. Yet, I found that the two approaches differ. Social movement scholars study how a movement recruits participants and motivate them to participate in collective action. Feminist movement scholars discuss structural transformation in the individual woman's environment as well as personal transformation to identify with the movement.

Feminist movement theorists use a terminology that is quite different from that which is used in social movement literature. They recognize three elements of movement involvement: (1) constructing a collective identity or identification; (2) raising awareness

of the connection between gender inequalities and the solutions embodied in feminism; and (3), indirect factors such as shifts in social structures and environments. Collective feminist identity is a shared "allegiance to a set of beliefs, practices, and ways of identifying oneself" (Whittier 1995: 23).

In the literature, allegiance to a feminist collective identity is translated into action when women break their confinement, from the structural isolation imposed on them by the family. They do so by presenting themselves in the hitherto male dominated public sphere, which entails a degree of relief from their domestic duties, and ideally generates further degrees of economic and social liberation. Their participation also "fostered a female world of friendship that created new associations, networks, connections, and linkages between women" (Buechler 1990: 14).

A major factor in recruiting members to feminist organizations and increasing awareness of feminism in the United States has been achieved throughout the 1980s and 1990s through "women's studies classes, lesbian communities, and by feminist mothers and women's movement publications" (Whittier 1995: 14). Further, Buechler posits that "There is mounting evidence that women in nontraditional positions are the most likely recruits to a feminist movement… combined with evidence that more women are finding themselves in such positions, the potential for ongoing feminist recruitment and mobilization seems promising" (Buechler 1990: 218). However, I find that nontraditional

positions are a weak predictor of women's agency[28], and are better interpreted as the endpoint of a previous process of becoming than a starting point for feminist activism. If one expects religious women to be more subordinate to patriarchal norms, cases like Rima Fakhry of Hezbollah and Rabab Sadr will come as a surprise. This presumption lacks a sense for the finer grained dissents, resistances and collaborations that are possible within the female culture of strongly religious groupings.

Moreover, scholars posit that shifts occur in the social structures, in which women's roles were traditionally routinized, to allow them greater autonomy. Klein (1984) claims that support for feminism grew along with "women's increasing labor force participation…, changes in the nature of the family, the definition of motherhood, and women's educational attainment" (Buechler 1990: 218). Structural transformations, which occurred at the turn of the nineteenth century in religion and education, according to Nancy Cott (2000), also allowed women to reconcile their domestic role and community involvement through church function. Similarly, Misciagno (1997: 85) confirms that: "… at the ideological level, women's history in the twentieth century indicates that there have been specific women who were, and specific women who were not, feminists. What we can also say is that the praxis of autonomy, which is the essence of de facto feminism, has its

[28] Nancy Fraser states that: "*either* we limit the structural constraints of gender so well that we deny women any agency *or* we portray women's agency so glowingly that the power of subordination evaporates. Either way, what we often seem to lack is a coherent, integrated, balanced conception of agency, a conception that can accommodate both the power of social constraints and the capacity to act situatedly against them" (1992: 17). Fraser, Nancy and Sandra Lee Bartky. 1992. *Revaluing French feminism : critical essays on difference, agency, and culture*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. Accepting Fraser's argument, I define contentious agency as a conception that recognizes both social constraints and the capacity to act within them in an effort to promote change. I am guided in my definition by Giddens, Anthony. 1986. *The constitution of society : outline of the theory of structuration*. Cambridge:

point of origin not in ideology, but in the conflict with an objective material condition." Thus, Misciagno proposes that autonomy is not a goal but a practice, which, once started, sets up a relationship of mutual conditioning with its circumstances, altering objective material conditions and being altered by them in turn.

The data that I report in this chapter supports the notion that some shifts did indeed occur in Lebanon's social structures and environments which contributed to the conditions that made possible more intense and more expansive women's participation in a movement, per the testimony of my interviewees. It also highlights that gender inequalities are significant and that systematic study of this phenomenon is important. However, my research does not affirm the creation of a common identity as a feasible heuristic structure for organizing social action, in spite of the role identity has played in theorizing feminism in the United States. Unlike the claim that women in nontraditional positions are the most likely recruits to a feminist movement (Klein 1984; Plutzer 1988), the majority of the women I interviewed, could not envision their activism outside their traditional roles.

B. Embeddedness in the Family

This section illustrates the nuclear family's significant role in setting up favorable conditions for some women to take on activist roles in social movements. Embedded activists have followed the course of activism described by social movement and feminist movement theorists. However, they have gone beyond these descriptions to benefit from

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Polity. Gidden claims that agency is coproduced and that actors' actions and practices become structural

their pre-existing social structures and networks and have recognized that swimming against the tide is not only impossible but harmful. Women receive empowerment and support from their kin members, especially fathers, mothers and husbands.

The nuclear family plays a typical socializing role in Lebanon, ensuring the education of children and fostering in them the larger moral and civic principles which make for the social reproduction of cultures. Women also gain awareness of social injustice because of the discrepancy they sense between their family environments and the social inequalities they witness in the community around them. But the other role that the family plays is empowerment and support. This role is not, of course, peculiar to Lebanon, especially since the family, as a social institution, has never ceased to provide all sorts of support for its members.

1. SUPPORTIVE FATHERS, UNCLES AND BROTHERS

To save the reader the agony of trying to deduce the impact of the male kin member, I provide my conclusion upfront. None of the activists disregarded the presence of the male kin members in their lives. Shiite Professor Fadia Hoteit proclaims: "I have always loved the men in my life. They were very supportive of me, my father, my brother, and my husband…" The most influential kin members were fathers, but activists also talk about their uncles, grandfathers and brothers. Whether fathers were supportive or not, this did not deter activists from expressing how these men made a difference in their commitment to social justice. I will discuss the husband's support in a later section below but I will focus here on the support that women received from their natal male kin members.

Most fathers were activists' role models in perseverance, pursuit of knowledge, tolerance and open-mindedness, commitment to high morals and beliefs, dedication to social justice and abundant love, as I will show below. Uncles and brothers were mentioned as learning-agents who challenge women's beliefs as young girls and open their eyes to the wide world around them. While we might describe as embedded those who view their male kin members as positive influence in their lives, others did not have such a positive experience. Because of the negative experience in their upbringing, especially with fathers' oppression, the latter group pursued autonomous means to prove themselves to directly and indirectly overcome the disempowering effect of their fathers.

I begin my discussion of the role of the male kin member in the natal family, *Ahl* (fathers, brothers and uncles) with numbers. Eighteen (18) out of the thirty respondents' fathers were identified (either in the respondents' words or by my analysis of how they mentioned their fathers) as significant in motivating them to be active. Three (3) specifically expressed that they received opposition from their fathers and eight (8) either did not mention the father or did not recognize his role as effective. Among male kin members who are related by blood, five (5) activists discussed the role of their brothers (three of them) or their maternal uncles (*Khal* – خال) (two). Note that while I sometimes intentionally probed the respondent to discuss her family arrangements, most of the time reference to the father was voluntary and unsolicited.

Because so much feminist literature emphasizes woman to woman bonds, (see, for

example, Rose Glickman's 1993 study of fifty daughters of feminists) other bonds, especially those forged within the family relationship, have been under researched. This is especially distorting in the Lebanese context, where fathers' demeanors often constituted an exemplar of commitment to social justice nationalism that their daughters followed. Whether fathers were politicians, religious figures, scholars, military personnel, professionals, entrepreneurs, or government officials, supporting an activist role for the daughters was not necessarily correlated with a higher degree of educational attainment of fathers. Orthodox Dr. Ugarit Younan describes how her father was denied education despite the fact that his parents could afford to send him to school. However, as an adult he taught himself how to read, write and type up to 60 words per minutes. His eagerness to learn guaranteed his advancement at work. In turn, her father used to borrow money in order to pay for his two daughters' private school. Relatives would always scold him for going out of his way to educate the girls. Younan's admiration of her father's perseverance encouraged her to earn her Ph.D. from France in education and to become one of Lebanon's most renowned civil society leaders.

Fathers who read to their daughters made way for their advancement in public service. Aida Nassrallah—a Druze member of the Lebanese Women League and a representative on the Lebanese Women Council— describes how her father's love for books influenced: "During those times, he used to read a lot. His library had many books including rare manuscripts that I read, whereas no other girls my age did. This instilled a drive in me recognized by all. It is a type of an endowment. I read many things that were not available to others from his library, even in English..." Doubtless we cannot claim a

direct relationship between activists being read to by their fathers and their career choices later on in life, but reading is only one of an array of empowering gestures. In fact, Druze Aida Nassarallah goes on to say: “Since childhood, I felt that all people were equal in all matters. As a child, I used to discuss my views of equal opportunities with my father. I believe that he introduced me to this style of didactic reasoning and I became a logical person judging everything according to rational choice of the human universe.”

Increasing their daughters’ awareness of their social surroundings was something that fathers achieved through means other than education too. For instance, touring Lebanon and exploring its eclectic social and geographic environments was an experience that several women shared. The father of Marguerite Helou, a Maronite Professor at the Lebanese University, did not drive; instead he would hire two taxis often on Sundays during the spring and the summer to take him with his wife and nine children to Lebanon’s beautiful beaches and mountains. For the Maronite Parliamentary Member Nayla Moawad, this kind of trip took place on Saturdays and Sundays. Similarly, the Maronite human rights lawyer Laure Moghaizel traveled extensively throughout Lebanon at an early age due to the nature of her father’s position. According to her son, Fadi, traveling familiarized her with “different areas, environments, and communities… that opened her mind to accept differences, and exposed her to social inequalities in her society.”

Activists spoke of how their fathers showed them how to live their morals and beliefs by assuming their responsibilities as citizens in the society. Afifa al-Said, a Sunni woman

who joined Laure Moghaizel in the nonviolence movement and is currently working with Beirut Association for Social Development (BASD), gives the account of the religion she was taught by her father: "My father's religiosity was very objective. He taught us about religion in a very gentle way. He never told us that certain actions are rewarded and punished in heaven or hell. That we never heard at home. Instead, he permeated us with religious creeds that teach ethics as the essence of religion and faith." For Afifa, religion is a guide to live an empathetic life. Her role in the association is focused on the social development of women, which is to her an expression of her faith. Similarly, Iqbal Dughan remembers her father's using his position as an Imam[29] to seek justice for women:

> My father is an enlightened religious leader… He was a sheikh, an imam of a mosque. He used to give lessons in religion in the corner of the mosque as well as lessons in Arabic in the College of Education. Women would come to him in the middle of the night after their husbands pronounce repudiation. You should have seen how my father scolded men and humiliated them. I used to copy his lectures neatly since my childhood, so I could recognize right and wrong.

Activists were also influenced by the example of their fathers living everyday to fulfill their commitment to advancing social justice. Moawad, who has served since 1991 as a deputy to the parliament, remembers her father as someone who once slapped the French *Haut Commissaire* during the colonial period. He taught his three daughters self-

[29] Imam is a religious leader in Islam.

confidence, patriotism and respect for the church even when these principles are painful to follow:

> We are three sisters; my father always supported us very very much. He always told us not to be afraid but to speak our minds; and that if anyone bothered us, he would send someone to teach him a lesson. So he empowered us a lot… We were three sisters and seven brothers. But you know? Now, my sisters and I remember how he believed in the authentic principles of the mountain life and in respect for the Maronite Church in Bkerki and love for Lebanon. In difficult times I lament why he planted in us this deep love for Lebanon.

According to my informants, their fathers empowered them by ordinary acts of loving, supporting, and involving them. Until Helou's father died when she was ten, she remembers how he made her feel responsible for contributing to the family's well being by earning good grades: "My father, although I know him very very vaguely until I was ten, he brought me up feeling that I participate at home. He would tell me that the bank gave us extra money after they saw that I was first in my class. He gave me my share of 5 L.L.[30] and told me that the rest contributed to the family expenses." I find this story amazing because not only was Helou motivated to study hard, as a young child she was encouraged to do it for the wellbeing of her family members. Knowing how self-centered children are, I find the behavior of Helou's father revolutionary. Although a monetary reward was involved for her hard work, her greater reward was in knowing that she contributed to financially sustain her family. In her story, Helou expresses how her

[30]About $1 in 1950's Lebanese currency.

feeling of responsibility toward her family and her community never left her afterward.

In the same manner, Ma□tre Mary Rose Zalzal, a Maronite family law lawyer who is a member of the Bahithat, described her father's treatment towards her as: "Exemplary! He gave me an incredible protection because he first gave me the assurance that I can do whatever I set my heart on. Second, and at the age of 12 or 13, he used to consult me. This gave me a lot of self-confidence when he involved me in making serious decisions on important matters. I remember that I used to scratch my head to give my opinion." Again, this is a motif that is repeated in many different ways but the upshot is that for these women, their fathers widened their horizons and nourished a sense of civic responsibilities in them from an early age.

Activists also spoke of their brothers and maternal uncles (*khal* – خال). Reference to the uncle was often in the context of memories of education. Shiite Professor Azza Charara Beydoun who was raised in her uncle's house attributes her interest in public affairs to her uncle being involved in the Syrian Nationalist political party and reading daily newspaper at home. Similarly, former Parliamentary Member Nuhad Suaid, a Maronite from the mountains, recognized her uncle as a role model in addition to her lawyer father and later her physician husband. "He was educated and cultured. He brought me books from Russia showing that people who planted wheat in Siberia had the determination to claim their right to life. He was a part of an Arabic cultural revolution, not the revolution that kills the innocents." Brothers were also mentioned by three respondents in the context of awareness and education. Fadia Hoteit, a Shiite professor at the Lebanese

University who is also a member of the Bahithat, describes her oldest brother, who played an important role in her life:

> I think that many of the things I did in my life were because of him. He was a journalist and used to enjoy writing and getting people to think. He was also involved in politics and learned foreign languages. He started taking me and my youngest brother with him and bringing us books to read. He almost drew a life path for us which we followed. Therefore my younger brother and I are now thinkers and writers. He was our example of education, ambition, and open mindedness.

While some fathers and other male family members had, according to the testimony of a number of activists, a palpable influence on their turn to activism, there were others who had negative influence. Here we encounter the tangled issue of the possible family roots of autonomous strategies. Within the family, a woman's search for autonomy is a continual issue for negotiation, sometimes being perceived as a threat, sometimes as time spent away from more important family duties, etc. Yet even those who seek a greater degree of autonomy do so, often, by using family connections in the public sphere. Others express no desire for the kind of individualism that broke up the strong kinship systems in the West.

Still, there are indeed a number of testimonies about fathers against whom activists had to struggle for their autonomy by ignoring, escaping or resisting them. Unsupportive fathers are ignored when they are relatively in a weak position vis-à-vis the activist. One activist

was already financially independent and working when she joined a civic society organization. Therefore, her father did not have the authority to prevent her from pursuing her interests. However, he had a discouraging impact on her. In fact, he would tell her that “those who do politics are simple minded people.” She acknowledged that her family in general had an impact on her personality type but did not determine her choices in life. Therefore, she was able to avoid dealing with the father’s interference.

One activist, whose father was “authoritative,” comes from a remote village. He did not want her to go to college but rather stay in her village subject to his control. By breaking away from her life in the village and going to Beirut to finish her education, she was the only one to go against her father’s strong will. Her testimony is a version of a story often told in the west since Betty Friedan’s time: the activist’s struggle to gain resources for herself autonomously without the support of her family. This trajectory also happens in Lebanon, although the obstacles are higher for a woman, as the kinship system is more all pervasive.

Another activist describes her father as traditional and fanatic man who used to “lightly” beat his children. However, “he was authoritative to a point that as soon as we would hear his name or his voice, we would shake from fear.” As the oldest of her siblings, this activist started confronting and resisting her father at the age of 14. He used to interfere with the way she dressed and with every little matter in the house. Despite the autonomy claims of these three activists, the latter two examples show that the unsupportive or actively authoritative father was not marginal to the woman’s process of claiming her

agency. Her relative autonomy was acquired by learning to resist his authority, thus formulating, on the personal level, a proactive strategy, whereas escaping or ignoring the father effect were reactive or passive strategies. Thus, there are shades in responding to the negation presented by paternal opposition to female autonomy.

Other activists became autonomous by default as their fathers' left an relatively unfelt impact in their lives: a) the father died when the activist was very young; b) the father was ill and unable to make an impact; c) the father was irresponsible wasting his money on his pleasure; d) the father spent most of his time outside the house with his friends; and e) the father expressed emotional sentiments but not actual support and encouragement for civic participation. In all these cases, activists came from modest working class families or lived either in rural areas or in al-Dahhiya.

In other social classes, family empowerment was dependent on the gender makeup of their children. Sibling relationships were controversial as stressed by Joseph (1994) and empirically extended by Helou's survey of political candidates. As fifty percent of political candidates did not have brothers, Helou (1998) suggests that parents groomed their girls to fill the gap created by the absence of a son (e.g. al-Ali, Ferzli, Moawad, and al-Khalil). Hence, she infers that discriminating against daughters is less likely to happen if brothers are not present. Of course exceptions were found among those in families with boys and girls, but Helou believes that family's social and educational statuses were influencing in providing both boys and girls with equal opportunities, among the middle and intellectual class only (Helou 1998: 198).

As I mentioned in the introduction to this section, for 18 out of the 30 respondents in my sample, fathers were especially significant in motivating them to become activists. They read to their daughters, consulted them on major issues, solicited their input in the sake of the family welfare, showed them their abundant love, and most importantly, lived their lives as role models in their dedication to public service and social justice. However, our study of the natal family is not complete without touching upon the role that female kin members played and whether they had any impact on the activism of Lebanese women.

2. DAUGHTERS OF THE VIRGIN MARY

Although I did not formally ask my respondents about the role of their mothers in their activism, I was able to group their attitudes towards their mothers' impact according to three categories, all of which involve an element of sacrifice that activists modeled after the most sacred symbol of sacrifice, the Virgin Mary mother of Jesus[31]: a) My mother could not get a chance in life so she made sure that I did; b) my mother did not get her chance in life but I am going to make sure that I do; and c) my mother's achievements make her my role model. Ten activists identified with the first category, eight with each of the second and third categories, while four did not discuss their mothers' impact. For the first two categories, I use an in vivo imago label: "My mother is the Virgin Mary" to exemplify the extent of her sacrifice for her children and devotion to her family. Orthodox Professor Lamia Rustum Shehadeh justifies that although her father was her

[31] Although this is an invivo expression, both Muslims and Christians recognize the Virgin Mary. In fact, the nineteenth Sura in the Quran, entitled Mariam (Mary in Arabic), tells the story about Mary's birth, upbringing, and her immaculate conception of Jesus; and throughout the Quran Jesus' lineage is listed as the son of Mary.

role model, the town labeled her mother as the Virgin Mary. Shehadeh's mother fits in the first category of women who were denied their chance in life but made sure that their daughters made up for both of them:

> My grandfather did not let finish her education. She left after the sixth grade. Even though she wanted to study more, he said enough. He sent her from Hama, Syria, where they are from, to Lebanon to study in American schools. He let her younger sister finish 9th grade, the third girl got her high school degree and finally the fourth earned her bachelor. My mother was the oldest and she paid for it.

Her feeling of unfair treatment vis-à-vis her three sisters made Lamia's mother adamant about making sure that Lamia achieved her autonomy through education and work. After earning her Ph.D. at Harvard, Lamia returned with her husband to Lebanon to start their family. She was under a lot of pressure from her in-laws to devote her time to raising her son. But Lamia's mother told her "Never leave your job! This is my will to you to never leave your work. You must always be independent and self-sufficient." Similarly, Druze Princess Hayat Arslan's mother was always by her side even though "she didn't have her say with my father but she used to encourage me, 'do whatever you want my daughter, do whatever you want.'"

Yet the mother relationship in the second category also evokes resentment among some activists, who perceived their mothers as either passive or favoring boys over girls in the house. Al-Said's complaint was repeated a number of times by a number of activists, who contrasted their mother's behavior to their fathers' ultimate love and adoration, "For my mother, men did not do housework. She discriminated. But for me, men must do

housework. So I used to tell her 'why only the girls have to do housework?' We never saw my brothers do a thing in the house. Even though we had servants, we were still expected to cater to our large family."

The second category of activists felt that their mothers were so subdued in their "traditional" gender roles that they could neither help themselves nor their families. In the activists' opinion, these mothers fell victims to the tyranny of their fathers or husbands and failed to realize their own potentials. Activists either resented their mothers' lack of agency. Although they felt sorry for them, they did expect their mothers to step out of their passivity. One activist describes her attitude towards her mother's passivity as follows:

> Activist: My mother was not strong; there are women in her generation who were stronger. But my mother was submissive. I used to be shy or afraid to describe her as such but I no longer feel this way. She is the mother and the woman why did she let my father become a pharaoh. I don't know if you know this word but as she did not challenge my father, he became more authoritative.
>
> Stephan: You think if she had challenged your father…
>
> Activist: If she had the ability to dialogue with him, she could have deterred him. Times after times he would get used to her. How come he accepts me now? Not by choice. I never shut up. I put my eye in his eye, I am not afraid. What can he do? Hit me? He hit me once when I was engaged, what did he gain?
>
> Stephan: But you are his daughter, it is different with your mother, he could divorce her.

Activist: Let him divorce her. I told her to ask for divorce but she is too scared.

But this activist made sure that her life was very different than her mother's and that her husband did not possess her father's traits. She has been active in the women's movement for over twenty years and her husband has been very supportive. A subgroup in this category marginalized any role that their mothers could have played in their lives because they were autonomous women anyway. Rasha Momeh, who is a Sunni activist in Lebanon's LGBT organization, Helem, casually discussed that despite the fact that her mother was college educated while her father only had a high school degree, she continued to play "traditional roles" in the family "My dad is the dad and my mom is the mom."

The third category of activists represents those who were mesmerized with their mothers' achievements. Although examples are many, below are fascinating stories that describe the agency of women at the turn of the Twentieth Century in four different social settings: Business, public service, charity and education. In business, Orthodox Anita Nassar admired her mother for making it all the way. She was a woman who made an impact. She was the first woman to open a shop in Lebanon:

Nassar: In Lebanon! Commerce woman (*Tagera* - تاجرة)… And everybody came to take a photograph. All the newspapers talked about Nora Farah, first woman to open a shop.

Stephan: What did she sell?

Nassar: She … sold all those *prêt à porter*, she was the only woman. Usually in

> the past, all the commerce people would go on one plane to go get the collections from Europe. She was the only woman among them. There was only one other woman, who was Madame Salha, who was a dress maker for the Emirates. But she was the only woman…Even now, I still see people who say, "You see this scarf? I bought it from your mom." The Dior, the Nina Ricci, all the *signé* (brand names) stuff.

During the Lebanese wars of the seventies, Anita used the sales skills that she learned from her mother to market the artistic production of students in her women's empowerment workshops.

The second example is given by Rabab Sadr, the sister of Lebanon's most beloved Shiite Imam:

> I had my mother as an exemplar in my life. Even as an old veiled woman, my mother was present in the society. She built relations with people and offered them services. She connected with them although she was not educated. If they needed something, she would make her connections and serve them. She would carry a message to the authorities. Whoever had a need and sought her, she would serve him. I was raised in the house of service.

The third example is that of Nayla Moawad who describes how her mother and the women in her family taught her about social service and charity:

> I lived in a house of social and charitable work. For instance, my uncle's wife, *Sit Alexandra Issa Al Khoury* was the directress of the Red Cross for thirty years, and

> so was her mother before her… My mother also had her charity work…. My mother gave a lot and had many activities. Every Thursday she would host lunch with the wife of my other uncle for the elderly in the nursing home. All of Bcherri's poor came to my mother and she helped them.

The story about Moawad's family alludes to the role of the extended family because in her story, her extended family played a strong part in her life. They lived together in the same building and motivated each other to be involved in public life and helping others.

In education, Azza Charara Beydoun's grandmother was from the Osseiran kin group. She learned the Quran, mathematics and writing, and earned a certificate from a junior college. She toured Lebanon when it was under Ottoman rule teaching literacy classes. When the economic situation became tough in the empire, she received food rationing from the Ottoman administration for being a teacher. With it she was able to sustain her entire family. Beydoun's mother followed in the footstep of her mother and taught for forty years. After attending a Catholic school in Beirut and graduating from the Teacher's College in Beirut, she was stationed in Bint Jbeil, a border town with Israel. She was the only teacher in the school, but after she taught the children in the morning, she enlisted the adults to come for literacy courses which she designed and taught. And she organized the classes in various shifts.

A noteworthy diversion from motherhood leads us to grandmothers. The grandmother's agency was often notably influential as exemplars for women activists even if their mothers were not as "modern" or active. Christian Jean Said Makdisi notes her

realization that the advancements she achieved in her own career were championed by her grandmother at least half a century before her: “When I first started teaching, I felt I was doing something important and new. I told myself, as Mother so often told me, that I was ‘modern’, a ‘modern’ wife and mother, one who worked while caring for her family. I did not know then that Teta [grandmother] had been ‘modern’ long before me, that she had worked decades before I congratulated myself on doing so” (Makdisi 2006: 132). Slaibi conducted research on the subject of generational differences in claim making and activism for reproductive rights. She found that although activism did indeed skip the generation of mothers, it was very prevalent among the grandmothers generation. Her study, which she conducted on generational approaches to family planning, concluded that old couples, the grandparents’ category, collaborated in planning out most farming activities. Although female farmers had large families, they were not as ignorant and powerless as the next generation. During the French Mandate era, the mothers’ generation suffered more injustices and greater ignorance. Men became dominant and women lost control over the decision-making of the house. Moreover, Christian and Muslim religious apparatus furthered women’s segregation and isolation by commanding them to obey their husbands. The current generation was more open, more aware, and more in control although they did struggle against the interference of the church in their lives and marriages, especially in using forbidden birth control methods.

In general, mothers and grandmothers are not marginal members of the Lebanese family or the Middle Eastern society. They are seen as “the heart of the family unit, and thus the heart of society as a whole,” according to Fatima Mernissi (Fernea 2003: 132). Imam

Musa Sadr, who was probably the greatest of all Shiite religious leaders, reflected the position that women occupy in the center of social live. According to his sister, Raba Sadr, "The Imam Musa Sadr considered 75% of the society to be women, because she rears children and prepares the future righteous citizens. Therefore her role is much more important than the man."

As I have shown above grandmothers' agency and heroism are among the influential factors that respondents mentioned often while their mothers' sacrifices were a source of inspiration. Despite the relatively weak role that mothers played in motivating their daughters' civic engagement, their impact was felt more significantly in encouraging activists' claim to their autonomy. Regardless of the resentment that some activists felt about their mother's passivity, they appreciated the sacrifices they offered and respected them. Now we turn to husbands who coached their wives and encouraged their activism.

3. COACHING HUSBANDS

My interest in this section is to contribute to the modalities of feminist activity. In particular, I am interested in husband's coaching role in influencing women's choice to become activists. This role was mostly felt among female politicians but was also mentioned by some activists. Twenty-four out of the thirty women I interviewed discuss receiving support or encouragement from their husband. Of the rest, five were single and one did not feel that her husband's support was influential.

As I have shown in the Theory Chapter, studies have shown that the spouse is often the

co-partner in another's agency and his or her participation in the public sphere even in western cultures. Liao and Stevens (1994: 695) called the spouse "a married person's most important family member," and Houseknecht and Macke (1981) especially stressed the significant role of a husband in supporting and advancing a married woman's career. If we can extend this argument to include shared beliefs in women's rights, the support of the husband can be viewed as an essential element of women's civic involvement.

To illustrate my point, I begin with a symbolic picture[32] of Samir Geagea and his wife, Parliamentary Member Strida Geagea. This image symbolizes the point of this section and portrays the "coaching" relationship that Samir has with his wife as he guides her political stance in the Parliament.[33] Strida maintained the Lebanese Forces while Samir was imprisoned since 1994. For eleven years, she led the public campaign for his acquittal and succeeded in 2005. When the Syrians left Lebanon, the Forces were free to reclaim their political power and come back to the political arena by placing Strida in the parliament so she would hold Samir's seat.

[32] http://yalibnan.com/site/archives/2006/9/img/lf%20rally%206%20geagea%20and%20strida.jpg
[33] Samir Geagea, the leader of the right wing Christian Lebanese Forces party was imprisonned for eleven years since 1994 for his grave autrocities during the civil war. His wife is the daughter of the prominent Taouk Maronite Lebanese family from Ghana in West Africa a former beauty queen. http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/MDE18/003/2004/en/dom-MDE180032004en.html

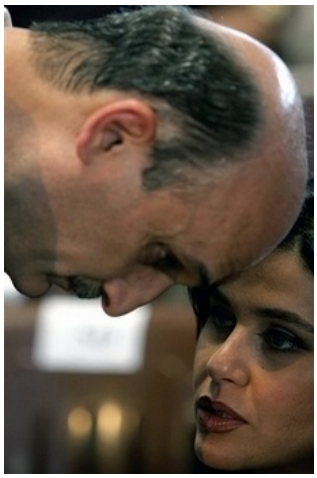

Figure 2: Samir Geagea and PM Strida Geagea

Source: http://yalibnan.com/site/archives/2006/9/img/lf%20rally%206%20geagea%20and%20strida.jpg

Men played a significant role in grooming their wives for political and public engagements. As the wife of a traditional Maronite leader, Moawad had to meet her husband's high expectations. He wanted her to bring his town people together; settle their conflict; contain them; listen to their problems; and help their women. Nayla did all that and more. She began her public life as the wife of the Zagherta leader (*zaeem* - زعيم) by opening her house to the town's families. She joined her husband's meeting with the town's men to address their local concerns. Her face and empowering projects became familiar to all. Her husband was later elected as the President of Lebanon and assassinated shortly after. Three days after his death, the "six thousand" members of the Zagherta region asked her to continue his legacy. She ran for the parliament and has been a deputy since 1991:

> Instinctively, I decided to continue. It was the image of a flag-carrying soldier who falls in the battlefield and his comrade runs to pick up the flag without

> thinking about the consequences. It has been and will unconceivable for a woman to become the *zaeem* of a kin group (زعيم عيلة).

Nayla's situation – her gain of political power due to her relationship to a politically powerful male – is by no means idiosyncratic to the Middle East. Political wives, who have participated in politics next to their husbands or after their death, joined politics in the United States as early as 1856 (Freeman 2000: 33), and the tradition extends up until the present. This means of accruing power is ambiguous from the feminist viewpoint, with some feminists openly criticizing women who 'inherit' their roles from their husbands. Party women emerged in the United States in the 1890 despite the fact that suffragists and reformers did not see them as the ideal candidates. The three female governors, who were elected in the 1920s, and 1966, replaced their husbands. And five of the first ten female Senators in the United States were appointed to fill positions vacated by their husbands. They "were elected or appointed solely to hold the seat open for the men who were expected to run for it" (Freeman 2000: 231). Of the 290 Congressmen who died between 1916 and 1993, 45 were succeeded by widows (Gertzog 1995).

Although Moawad's is an exceptional case of a political career forged in collaboration with her spouse rather than, as is more common, forged after the husband's death and in his place—it is still the case that, as with male politicians, women rely on family names to make political connections. Suaid gained experience as she helped her husband campaign for representing his region in the Parliament: "As a woman in the 1960s I played a political role. I received people in my house and fulfilled my social obligations. In many instances I contributed to breaking the ice and to canvassing by entering homes.

I accompanied my husband in entering homes and I entered homes by myself. My husband used to attend large events while I concentrated on the one-on-one contact with the ladies." After his death, she had learned from his coaching how to run her own campaign and eventually win a parliamentary seat in 1996.

Activists were not only aided passively by the approval of their husbands, they were empowered by them. Husbands helped their wives realize their own potentials and form their own discourse. The conjugal relationship as represented by my informants is one of negotiation in relationship to the non-negotiable constant of advocating for women's rights, which is personalized as a life task with which the activist identifies. Caroline Slaibi, a Maronite member of the Women's Democratic Gathering, most eloquently describes her husband's role:

> I was influenced by him and his arguments made sense to me… But don't ever think that he built my life for me. No, he did not. Even if I had not met a supporting and understanding husband, I would have created one. I mean, if a man blocks my way, I would leave him and continue because I know myself.

Many activists share the common denominator of having supportive and empowering husbands in their lives. Husbands took active roles in encouraging activists to gain social consciousness. This cultural aspect was significant to politicians and activists because with their husbands' support, activists earned experience and recognition in the society.

In summary, I have shown so far, the nuclear family in its two forms (*Aila* and *Ahl*) was significant to motivating women to participate in social and political activism. Although

the motivation was mostly positive, we also saw cases in which resentment against the family as an impediment to autonomy was also significant in provoking women to prove themselves and defy their parents or spouse. The testimony of my interviewees suggests that the immediate family exerts, at the very least, as much a positive influence on the chance that women will become activists as a negative influence. This in itself should dispel the notion that the family only operates as a negative structure. Further, the autonomy model, with its individualistic bias, is unable to fully capture the utility and meaning of the family's influence and of the kinship connections as vehicles for women to gain a greater opportunity to engage in public life. However, I have, until now, not focused specifically on the role of those kinship connections in providing the ground of opportunity for women to create successfully activist personas. I now turn to what I call kinship capital.

C. "Kinship Capital" and Activism

Although I cannot generalize to all activists in Lebanon, on the basis of my limited number of interviews, I argue that extended kin groups can be considered a source of social and cultural capital in the public sphere as they provide (elite, intellectual and middle class) women with status, access and support. Like other forms of capital possessing assets and liabilities, social capital generated by kin groups, or as I call it kinship capital, was strategically employed by activists whose families are elites, intellectuals or middle class. Among the elites, the kin's social status affords individuals the support of their surrounding community, and sometimes the direct acquisition of power. The intellectuals, who are mostly found in the ranks of the middle class in regard

to their income but with high levels of educational attainments, acquire their intellectual capital by maintaining a family heritage of knowledge. Lebanese activists descending from middle class families have benefited from their kin membership in three ways: size, as large kin groups are powerful voting units; reputation, as member(s)' reputation is transferable onto the rest of the kin group; and respectability, as family reputations are formed over time, and often associated with piety, or standing in a religious organization.

In the United States, we put bumper sticker on our cars or wear t-shirts or buttons to indicate our stances on issues such as abortion, welfare, etc. The family name becomes like a bumper sticker that provides the clue to place where the person stands in relations to politics and religions in Lebanon and other Arab states. Hence, the need to 'place' is not a mere idiosyncrasy of Arab cultures, derived from some tribal root, but is common to other cultures, which simply use different clues to understand the converser's position to set the terms for "starting a conversation.' Bourdieu (1986) recognizes the social capital inhering in the name of a family; which Lebanese Professor Azza Charara Beydoun expands to indicate that, in the public opinion, placing people is benign yet critical to knowing the converser's kinship affiliation:

> Beydoun: It's cultural, I do it as well.
>
> Stephan: It's cultural?
>
> Beydoun: You tell me your name is Rita Stephan. I immediately know that you are a Christian. Now I place you.
>
> Stephan: Camille (my husband) wonders how I cannot recognize names. I say that I am glad not to be from here because I don't make big judgment.

Beydoun: It is not a matter of judgment. Look! In my Ph.D. research, I interviewed priests, sheikhs, and professionals in psychology and other fields. They could not talk to me. I noticed that it's impossible to start a conversation before they place you. I had started this research immediately 3-4 years after the end of the war.

Stephan: How do you deal with that?

Beydoun: I don't mind it, I find it cultural. And that's okay for me, I don't judge it.

This example illustrates the cultural aspect of how family names function to "place" people, although the family provides more than clues. It also provides status, support and empowerment as I will show next.

As I indicated earlier, Lebanon is a society that is highly differentiated by family status. My fieldwork led me to classify family status in the following four socio-economical categories: The "Velvet" families, so called by Princess Arslan to describe the remnants of Lebanese aristocracy, historically intellectual families who have a legacy of intellectual leadership for hundreds of years, middle class family who consider themselves fortunate to have been given proper education and opportunities and the "less fortunate" who are typically the working class family that are the recipients of the enlightenment and support given by other classes. Though I tried to separate the discussion of kinship from class, that goal became harder with each case as it quickly became apparent that separating family status (an important determinant of class position) from civic engagement made no sense in the Lebanese context. Although the

story might appear to have cultural significance only for ‘less developed’ societies, I have a strong feeling that towards the end, my reader would realize similarities with cases that have been prevalent even in western societies throughout history.

All six women who were members in the Velvet elite kin groups were automatically provided access to public service through their kinship structures. They all used it very wisely as we shall see. Similarly, all five members of the intellectual kin groups were given a solid account of public leadership through their kin’s cultural capital, acquired through education, which, although from one perspective a contingent property, was a family habit spread over generations. These women continued their kin’s leadership role in government, academia and civic society. The third group is perhaps the most interesting. These are the middle class who did not have the family heritage that guarantees them access to public life. However, they had one of the following things going for them: a) prominent member or members of the kin group whose name(s) became known publicly; b) a kin name that was recognized for its large numbers which translated into political power; or c) public respect as the result of kin members participation in the clergy.

a. Women of the Velvet Society

The kin’s social status afforded *Zoama* women a sense of confidence in being able to rely on the surrounding community, which sometimes translated into the direct acquisition of power in the absence of their male kin members. Elite kin groups, zoama, allow women the opportunity to become chiefs of their clans, which entail automatic possession of the

loyalty of a group of supporters. Nuhad Suaid fought four fierce election battles against a powerful military general, Raymond Eddeh: "I am a clan leader (*sheikhet Rab'a* – شيخة ربعة). People love me because for years I have organized tours for Cordoba women after the war to see Lebanon. I also market the crafts and arts they do at home. I am present in their clubs and town hall meetings… People called themselves the Lady's men (*zelm el set* – زلم الست) or the General's men (*zelm el ameed* – زلم العميد)." She lost the first battle to him by only 800 votes and won her last battle against him 25 years after her husband's death. Her supporters were not only loyal to her for her social services in their region, but also for being a descendent of the Germanos family from a neighboring town in the region: "I am the daughter of the Akoura region, from the small town of Markeb next to Cordoba. I come from a political family—a Germanos once was a deputy in a coalition with Raymond Eddeh. I have a law degree plus my face was familiar to people. I did not need any introduction. People knew whose daughter I was and whose wife I was." Her father-in-law was a doctor who not only built a hospital for his town but also led his *Ashirah* (tribe). Her husband followed in the footsteps of his father and became a doctor as well. He later decided to run for public office and became a deputy in 1964. Upon his death in 1965 of a heart attack, a coalition from the mountain, including Christian and Muslim religious leaders and party comrades, decided to nominate his widow Nuhad, the young mother of six young children, as his successor.

Most of the times, this sense of trust became a second nature upon which female and male leaders based their activism: "We are told that for one thousand years, The Sadrs

have *Ulama* and *Mujtahedeen*.[34] They have all served religion and people. There is a record of them, so let me contribute one dot to this record." Although I tried to steer the conversation to the direct impact that her brother Imam Musa Sadr had on shaping her propensity for public service, she kept taking me back to the history of the Sadr kin that is filled with examples of public service and leadership:

> My grandfathers were all *mujahedeen*[35] for human rights, they spent their lives serving people, developing society and spreading love, religion and good relations. Therefore, they were always subject to harassment. Hence, our fourth grandfather suffered political persecution and was jailed in Akka, Palestine. But people say that a miracle happened and the jail gates were open for him. That's not true. The jailer saw that my grandfather was an innocent man so he opened the gates for him. Anyway, he left Akka to Iraq and worked in social service. Our first and second grandfathers are also born in Iraq. My father who was born in Iraq as well moved to Iran and married my mother, the daughter of the grand *Mujtahed* Sayyed Huseein Qammi. Hence, my father and mother's kin were people with open minds who spent their lives serving humanity.

Another interviewee in this group, Hayat Wahhab, who married Prince Faysal Arslan, describes how the Arslans have been the Druze community's political leaders for 1300 years. Throughout history, her extended natal kin group, the Wahhabs, used to be the military leaders of the Arslans:

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[34] Scholars and theologians
[35] Activists

> And my uncle, Shakib Wahhab, if you read the history of Lebanon, you have to come across his name. He was one of the leaders of the great Syrian Revolution with Sultan Pasha Atrash and Adel Arslan; and he was one of the bravest and most durable leaders of the revolt, he's mentioned everywhere and in the French archives, he is mentioned, in France, that he, I forgot the name of the French commission, but he exhausted the French army, and then he began with the Sherif Hussein of Mekka in 1916, and his last battle was with Mir Majeed (her father-in-law) when they were fighting for Palestine. When Mir Majeed Arslan was the Defense Minister in Lebanon and Shakib Wahhab was one of the military leaders who were helping in the *Malkieh* battle. He has such a rich history, being a military man as well something more. Before my uncle Shakib, my grandfather and great grandfather used to be the Arslan's representatives in the mountains. Whenever Prince Mustafa Arslan, - one of the most famous governors (قائم مقام), when Lebanon was divided into [Ottoman districts] - whenever he wanted to go to the Shouf, he had to stop at my grandfather's house. And it was a loft; you know lofts in Lebanon? And it is still there, the loft is still there. It used to be, they used to say poetry about it because it was, it had and still has, nine windows and one door, so the loft of Mohammad Wahhab used to be poetically very famous, because of the nine windows, to make nine windows is something. It is still there.

With such rich history of her kin group, Princess Arlsan felt compelled to play a significant public role in continuing her kin group's legacy:

> I am interested in public issues because we come from a family who has been

> leading for centuries. So when I got married, I got involved in anything that people asked me to help because you know in Lebanon, politics is not just the putting laws and regulations and supervising like in the United States, it is personal contacts and it is at the same time how much mediation you can help in doing, this makes you ranking either first, second or third.

In the Personal and Organizational Strategies Chapters I will show how she, and others, used their kin name and reputation to advance women's rights. Here, I would like to mention here that none of these women were passive, submissive or secluded. They had all earned a college degree, initiated or participated in charitable organizations and acted as mediators between the public and authorities.

It is noteworthy that the majority of political women in the leadership roles are still descendents of elite families. In contrast, intellectual kin groups, which showed a structurally similar engrained tradition of civic engagement and empowering their female members, differed in their paths to empowerment – and that difference in the path to empowerment had a significant impact on the history of the Lebanese women's movement.

The "first wave" of the women's movement in Lebanon emerged with the charitable efforts of the velvet society; it was transformed into a political movement through the efforts of the intellectuals. Those are the same intellectuals who worked together with leaders from the velvet society to create political parties in the late fifties. In order to attract wide membership in these parties, the middle class was recruited to join these

parties. Several of the political parties, began catering to the needs and interests of their members; they also wanted to modernize themselves by adopting advanced organizational structures imitated from foreign political groups. Therefore, women sections emerged within the party system, which opened up membership to the public.

b. The Fortunate Intellectuals

Laure Moghaizel's statement "We—the fortunate few—are indebted to society with what we have been given. We must return a little from this debt and gear up our activism to help the disadvantaged" (Moghaizel 1948), is often repeated by activists to summarize the relationship between activists and their extended kin groups. Those who were lucky enough to be born into privileged families assumed a social responsibility to give back to the society and help relieve the disadvantaged. This was the message in which many activists believed.

The extended family afforded activists in this category the ability to feel privileged as a group, a privilege that was viewed as requiring some reciprocity, some 'give back' to the social. Activists' sense of personal enlightenment and social responsibility might be mistaken as a reflection of their membership in the elite groups, but differed in its practical expression and its tendency, which was de-hierarchizing. Those who have had a long history of higher level of educational attainments among their kin groups considered themselves fortunate, but sought not to monopolize that fortune status but to democratize it. I was told that there are about 1000 families of this sort in Lebanon.

Both Joseph and Laure Moghaizels have a lineage that was entrenched in education and professionalism. Laure's mother, Labiba Saab, was a dissident in her own way. Labiba insisted on choosing her husband, Nasib Salim Nasr, in a time when the norm for women strongly discouraged any dissent from traditional arranged marriages. Labiba came from a prominent family whereas Nasib Nasr was an officer in the police who was highly respected for his great dedication to civic values and patriotism. Her mother was reasonably modern for her time and believed in offering all her children—especially the girls—the highest educational attainments. Laure became a lawyer and her sister became Lebanon's first female dentist. Similarly, Joseph had a reputable family background:

> His family background, on the contrary, his father was a physician, a very well-known physician in the South of Lebanon. One of two, he was the physician of the French army among other things. But he was a physician who was also a very strong believer. I am talking about religion, and probably this was the reason why he didn't make any money. I mean he used to, if you want, practice medicine for free. But, and he had seven children and my father was the only one who carried on with his university studies, the others went into banking. Just being banking employees.

We see that patriotism and service are considered to be the natural byproducts of education that the kin group provides to women (an aspect that I have shown in the Kinship Chapter). The next story shows that relation as well. Azza Charara Beydoun, a Professor of Psychology at the Lebanese University discusses her family history. Charara is her paternal family and Osseiran is her maternal family. From the stories about her

grandmother and mother as educators we can detect a connection that we can verify with her father's family:

> We have a tradition in the Charara family. We are known to be theologians (*Mashayekh* – مشايخ). Mashayekhs earned their status from becoming theologians… My father graduated from the Teacher College and he was the boys' school teacher in Bint Jbeil. His father was also a teacher… And the father of my grandmother, Sheikh Musa Charara was among the first people who built religious schools in Amel Mountain (in Southern Lebanon). So my father's ahl are also educated. My father, Abdel Lateef Charara, translated and authored over sixty books.

It is noteworthy that the Osseirans have had many political leaders including the famous Adel Osseiran, the former Speaker of the Parliament, who is somehow related to Azza, but she is also married to Ahmad Beydoun, a professor whose father was also a deputy. Thus, the intellectual families recognize each other and form alliances by marriage, distinguishing themselves as a social category.

Women descendent from intellectual family were very important to the "second wave" of the women's movement in Lebanon that politicized women's issues and embedded them in political parties and causes. Both Laure and Azza were active in political parties, and participated in advancing and raising awareness of women's rights through their democratic and communist political parties respectively. These parties attracted a number of middle class women to become active politically although their extended kin structures had an equally effective influence on their activism, as I show next.

c. The Middle Class

Ideally speaking, the middle class should be classified as the most autonomous according to the perspective of social movement theorists. The middle class is the engine that defeated aristocracy in England and France and built the United States' civil society. Instead of the middle class being the engine of the struggle against colonialism, it was the elite families who led the battle, and even today the descendents of the fathers of Lebanon's independence are Lebanon's current sectarian leaders. Beydoun helps us understand that the political system in Lebanon is not necessarily intrinsically hostile to women, but is rather a system closed to all nontraditional groups. Being so structured around exclusive families, the Lebanese political system shows a quasi-feudal aspect in as much as ruling families seem to allot governing duties to themselves. Imposed upon this governing power by means of lines of descent are sectarian differences. Therefore, it is very difficult for the middle class to penetrate this type of feudal and sectarian aristocracy that is entrenched in what Ibn Khaldoun (1967) called *Assabiya* based on kinship and religious memberships.

Nonetheless, middle class women have sought their own niche in this closed system. Some have benefited from the large size of their kin groups who constitute powerful voting units. Politicians sought large families to win their political exchange value (*Tajyeer Aeli* – تجيير عائلي). Mona Fayad, a Shiite Professor of Psychology and a participant in the newly founded Renewal Movement political party, describes the effect of her family's numbers. "My grandfather is Hasan al-Qubaisi. The Qubaisis were the first people to come down to Beirut [from the South], and now we are the largest electoral

family. We are about 10,000 members. I am sure we all exaggerate with numbers… but they had a Mukhtar[36] among them and were always pursued by deputies for their votes." She did not benefit from her grandfather's family name because she chose not to activate her kinship ties, although she could have definitely utilized them for political gains if she wanted to.

The presence of a prominent member of the kin group whose name became known publicly provides a second exploitable asset for middle class women as member(s)' reputation is transferable onto the rest of the kin group. While Chamseddine, a Shiite attorney, claims that she comes from a simple family and from a small town, she definitely recognizes that her motivation to become a lawyer is linked to her uncle's reputation as a prominent judge in the legal field:

> Chamseddine: Because my uncle is a renowned judge, Afif Chamseddine if you have heard of him. He is in the Legal Council and the Supreme Court. He is an important lawyer in Lebanon and a scholar (*Faqih* - فقيه). His two daughters are also judges and his son is a lawyer.
>
> Stephan: Did that influence you?
>
> Chamseddine: Of course, it gives you direction in life. If the entire family is judges and lawyers what else would I study? I did not know what to study, so I entered this field.

[36]Mukhtar is a public administration position equivalent to a combination of a justice of peace and mayor. The term Arabic means "chosen" to refer to the head of a village or neighborhood in many Arab countries. The name refers to the fact that mukhtars are usually selected by some consensual or participatory method, often involving an election.

A third pattern of influence that could be seen among middle class interviewees was respectability from the reputations associated with piety or standing in a religious organization that families formed over time. This family-defined commitment to morality and values was especially noticeable among those middle class families that had significant dealings with religions. Nassar searches for the motives behind her activism and find the answers in her family history and her education: “First of all I come from a family which has a history of priests and archbishops and so on. So already they have religion in the family. Religious, not in the matter of sectarian like this, no. But believing in values, in high values. But basically this comes also from my education in British schools which were all the Anglicans, the missionaries, where they have installed in us all these high values and the love for serving the community which unfortunately now none of the schools have it, not even here [LAU].”

Autonomous middle class women are individuals whose families did not automatically offer them connections, status or access, but whose educational and financial attainments allowed them entry into the intellectual class and elite classes. Everybody in Lebanon reminded me that the late former Prime Minister Hariri was a descendent of a middle class family who, through his hard work and perseverance, acquired a high status in business and politics. Although I did not interview any self-made businesswomen, I did interview intellectuals whose status was ‘self made’, i.e. who did not come from traditionally intellectual families. A good example of this type is Professor Marguerite Helou. Helou’s father died at a young age and her family struggled to sustain itself.

Helou put herself through college by winning a scholarship to earn her Ph.D. in International Relations from Syracuse University. Upon returning to Lebanon and assuming a professorship position at the Lebanese University, Helou became a member of the group of Lebanon's premier intellectuals who involve themselves in political analysis and think tanks. She was later recruited to monitor women's participation in municipal election and that was the beginning of her work on women's rights and participation. She is a well known name in the women's movement for her objective opinions and scholarly political surveys.

As one might expect from this account, most of the women from middle class families can be more easily fitted into the autonomous than the embedded model. However, we should not underestimate the heterogeneity of Middle Eastern societies as no one model will fit the entire society. Some middle class respondents would not consider kinship as an acceptable resource for political and civic involvement. They made conscious efforts to build their creditability on the basis on their struggle and reject what little their kin group could offer them. Wadad Chakhtoura objected irritably to my question regarding her family name's impact on her activism: "What's this? Where did you get this from? It has no effect. I made my course. My course is made with struggle not through traditional politics! The story is not like this at all." Wadad began her civic engagement as an elected representative in the teacher's syndicate. She later joined the Labor Communist Organization and was among the first female members who formed the women's section within this organization in the early seventies. In 1975, she left the party and established with other comrades and interested women the Women's Democratic Gathering.

Similarly, Catholic Linda Mattar joined the League of Lebanese Women's Rights in 1952, an organization that was founded by members of the communist party as well.

Women, like Wadad Chakhtoura (and Linda Matar), were among the bearers of the second wave of the women's movement. This happened mostly during the sixties and the seventies with the popularity of communism and socialism. Women participated heavily in political parties and professional unions and syndicates. Through their political parties, some women organized collectively to carve themselves a space within the political party structure and establish "women's sections." Eventually, women sections became marginalized within the party structure and women sought to break away. A number of these sections eventually separated from the party and became independent. Upon gaining their independence from their political parties, many women leaders established their own women's rights organizations and carried public campaigns to emancipate and recruit working class women to their movement. It is noteworthy that such trajectory is similar to the experiences of feminists in the West (See for instance Sanbonmatsu 2002; Young 2000).

d. The "Less Fortunate"

The third wave of the women's movement witnessed the expansion of membership to the working class through empowerment and development projects offered in the 1990s. After the UN Conference in Beijing and the end of the civil war in Lebanon, the women's movement, and civil society in general, became more professionalized and internationalized through interaction with various global agencies.

Young women from modest background, who experienced gender inequalities first hand—either through their family settings or through the restrictions that their communities imposed on their choices and chances in life—joined women's rights organizations either as entry level employees or as participants in their development programs. Through exposure to the organization's mission, the egalitarian relationship among its members and the total life commitments of its leader, women became convinced that these organizations and their message were the most appropriate venue for them to carry their own personal struggles.

Some of the women reached a level of self-actualization either through education, their marital relationship with an empowering man, or both. Upon achieving this level of proving themselves, they found joining women's organizations to be the natural next step. One activist, who comes from a modest family, joined one of Lebanon's leading women's rights organizations after earning an advanced degree in social sciences. Another activist describes how she discovered women's advocacy groups. In a way, the conflicts she experienced in her family pushed her to seek vocational training that eventually led her to the women's movement:

> Activist: I started volunteering at the age of 16.
>
> Stephan: Where?
>
> Activist: I was in al-Dahhiya and I was invited to this organization's social activities.
>
> Stephan: How?

Activist: I met an instructor of vocational training. I initially enrolled in their vocational training program. She was in the organization and she would tell about it. I had the proper preparation at 16, my thoughts and outlook on women's issues. There was something in my head that attracted me to this subject.

Stephan: Who planted that in you?

Activist: What planted that in me was my discriminatory upbringing at home.

In this negative sense, oppressive kinship relations motivated women to seek help in order to break away from their family imposed confinement and submissiveness. It is here that women's organizations stand as autonomous places that offer support outside kinship networks.

D. Conclusion

This chapter has emphasized the centrality of the nuclear and extended family in motivating women to become activists in Lebanon. I argued that the nuclear family was a significant agent of support and empowerment whereas the extended family provided women with a source of social capital as they become politically active in the public sphere. I presented cases that illustrate the positive and negative impact of the family on the personal level.

Based on the sample of activists I interviewed, I found that those who view their kin groups' influence as positive in their lives tend to be more embedded activists whereas others did not have such a positive experience. The latter group followed more

autonomous pathways to activism, similar to what we would expect from the social and feminist movements literature. The negative experience in activists' upbringing, especially with fathers' discouragement and oppression presented in the three cases above led some activists to pursue autonomous means in order to directly and indirectly overcome the disempowering effect of their families. In this negative sense, oppressive kinship relations were a reason why women sought the help of advocacy organizations in order to break away from their family imposed confinement and submissiveness. These pathways tend to be similar to those trajectories found in Western examples especially among radical feminists.

Although I cannot generalize to all activists in Lebanon on the basis of my limited number of interviews, I find it important to note that women who sought autonomy from the influence of their kin's social status and networks were mostly those whose kin groups provided them with negative or insignificant family resources. For the few middle class women who did not accrue positive social capital from their membership in a significant kin group, they pursued relatively autonomous means to become politically active in the public sphere by directly joining a political party or a nonprofit organization to build their activist reputation in these autonomous settings.

For activists who were more embedded in family relations and resources, the choice to become an activist was influenced by family members who helped prepare, encourage and empower them to take on activist roles in social movements. Individuals who had the most influence on women's decisions to engage in civic activities are the closest kin

members to activists, most importantly fathers. Many fathers were role models for at least 18 activists in my sample in perseverance, pursuit of knowledge, tolerance and open-mindedness, commitment to high morals and beliefs, dedication to social justice and abundant love. Mothers encouraged activists' claim to their autonomy and were symbols of self-sacrifices and respect. Finally, husbands encouraged and supported activists in gaining experience and recognition in the society.

Most activists identify themselves as embedded in kinship structures. They assumed their family's social status and utilized their durable social and professional networks. They utilized kinship as a source of social capital in the public sphere and a set of weak and strong connecting ties. In Lebanon, social capital is gained from family membership and fostered through its extended networks by a threefold process: Kinship determines the actor´s social status at the outset; its networks potentially grant activists access to the public sphere; and its backing projects trust and respect in the public sphere.

Family legacy and reputation were a source of motivation and resource to mobilize among elites, intellectuals or middle class activists. Elite activists benefited from the support that their kin group enjoyed from its surrounding community and the access it had to power. Intellectuals utilized their cultural capital to maintain their family heritage of knowledge and pass it on to help the less advantaged. Middle class activists have benefited from their kin's size, reputation and respectability in gaining a level playing field. While some activists pursued autonomous means to activism in one area, they remained embedded in other aspects of their family structure and relations. Middle and

working class activists, who lacked family-generated social capital, sought autonomous means by building their activist reputation from their work on the ground or their membership in political parties.

In addressing how an individual makes a choice to join a movement, this chapter illustrated that the emphasis on identification and autonomy as highlighted in the Western social movement and feminism scholarship is not found in among Lebanese women's accounts of their involvement in the women's movement. Applying empirical evidence from my fieldwork in Lebanon, I developed the thesis that embeddedness in the kinship structure does encourage activism and this phenomenon can indeed extend beyond Middle Eastern cultures and "traditional societies." Next we turn to how activists worked within their kinship system to advance women's rights and political recognitions.

CHAPTER FIVE: ACTIVISTS' PERSONAL STRATEGIES

A. Introduction

In this chapter, I turn to how women's rights activists manage the emotional work and practical constraints involved in leaving their homes to engage in advocacy for women's rights. Activists in the Lebanese women's rights movement use autonomous and embedded strategies to modify and partially dismantle the gender-specific divide between the public and private sphere. They expand on the capabilities provided for them within their family and culture to enhance women's status in their public as well as private roles. Activists who pursue their goals whilst seeking to retain their strong connections to the family structure will pursue strategies that do not confront the family, but seek elbow room in the family to create equal rights for women. Regardless of their stance on the significance of their family to their activism, community origin, or social status, activists use both embedded and autonomous tactics interchangeably.

By treating kinship, at least in the view of activists, as a resource which they use when applicable and beneficial, this chapter maps various autonomous and embedded individual trajectories to activism. First, I transpose and extend Granovetter's (1973; 1983) argument about the strength of weak ties to include extended kinship ties, showing how activists tapped into their kinship as well as professional and other social networks to advance their movement. Second I focus on individual strategies that enabled individual activists to join the women's movement.

B. Mobilizing Professional and Kinship Networks

Researchers like Hamzeh (2001), Moadell (2002), Jamal (2007) have noticed that clientelism, patronage, and corruption are prevalent in Middle Eastern states, perhaps more so than in Western democracies. Patronage is a form of mobilizing social networks that has an anti-democratic and rentier tendency, insofar as it reinforces entrenched power and allows privileged members to profit solely from their positions within a given party, bureaucracy, or organization. Realistically, it comprehends the important social and public connections that all reformist social movements must deal with. Like patronage, "محسوبية Mahsoubieh," is important in Lebanon because, in Dr. Ugarit Younan's opinion, it is an important channel to services and rights, "The state does not give us rights; it gives us services (which we receive from either our representatives or our confessions)."

As I discussed in the Kinship Chapter, the Lebanese society puts high premium on connectivity on the bases of kinship, confession, party, etc. Connectivity is evident in the strong and weak ties that shape and are shaped by these social relations. Granovetter (1983) suggests that individuals with multiple weak ties are more likely to enrich their social capital by increasing their chances to receive and exchange information from distant parts of the social system, to be informed of the latest ideas, and to have an advantage in the labor market. He further argues that individuals with extensive weak ties are more likely to organize and participate in political movement because weak ties allow individuals to touch the larger population as they connect to multiple social networks.

Granovetter (1983: 229) posits that "for a community to have many weak ties which bridge, there must be several distinct ways or contexts in which people may form them."

Mahsoubieh is an aspect of connectivity that bridges weak ties. As I explained in the chapter on kinship, it means "to be counted as," indicating membership in, fellowship with a clique or kin group. Christian Jean Said Makdisi proposed that Mahsoubieh should be modeled so that we can see "being well-connected … runs vertically as well as horizontally" (Makdisi 1996: 235-6). In combining Makdisi's suggestions with Putnam's theory on networks (1993), I argue that Mahsoubieh is a system of weak ties through which individual connect to other horizontal and vertical networks. Putnam (1993) suggests that horizontal relational structures translate into reciprocity and cooperation whereas vertical structures dictate authority and dependency. The connectivity model has been used to assess things as disparate as job searches or research citations. An example of the power of weak extended kinship ties in the Lebanese context is the very tactic I used to conduct these interviews (Maggie is the wife of the brother of the husband of the sister of my mother, my aunt). While my relationship with my aunt is relatively strong, I barely saw Maggie more than a few times in my life. However, to everyone, we are relatives. Through Maggie's professional connections I was able to interview political women all the way up to Maronite Parliamentary Member Nayla Moawad. Thus, the weak extended kinship tie that I have with Maggie served my research by being a bridge to her set of professional network.

The weak tie model grounds my disagreement with Jamal and Putnam. Jamal (2007: 7-8)contests that by being embedded in their societies, Arab states prevent the formation of autonomous civil society: “in Western democracies, autonomous interest groups already exist; channels of political participation are already guaranteed; and blatant clientelism, patronage, and corruption play a less important role in everyday political life than they do in the Arab world.”

To Jamal I respond by showing that some mahsouieh relations (like clientelism and patronage) are actual and practical channels of political participation in western democracies as well as in Arab states. And to Putnam I respond by arguing that weak social networks can be used to equalize the vertical axis of social relations by bridging horizontal relationships. These weak ties can be horizontal or vertical relations and can lead the individual to a connection with a target in other horizontal or vertical networks. When I met with Shiite Professor Fehmieh Charafeddine at a café, I asked her to personally phone Maronite Professor Marguerite Helou to introduce me. This is an example of horizontal collegial relation that allowed me, the researcher to connect vertically with Professor Helou. As for Granovetter, whose model was wholly American, I would modify his universe of examples by saying that complex kinship networks could very well encompass a number of ties of different intensities, within which one could find bridging social networks.

1. ACTIVATING PROFESSIONAL AND EXTENDED KINSHIP NETWORKS

Social networks are highly complicated and overlapping. In this section, I analyze how activists used their collegiate and professional ties as well as their kinship networks. I will first examine, as a background for comparison, the two social networks that are sanctioned by most Western social movement theorists.

The collegial network compelled me to reexamine the idea of the intellectual class which I discuss thoroughly in the Kinship Chapter. College education has been made available to all segments of the Lebanese society: the poor, the rural, even the most conservative and religious fundamentalists. Regardless of how prestigious their university was, graduates felt a significant degree of affinity towards other graduates from their high schools and universities. Those who graduated from foreign universities were truly left out of these cliques. While this type of relationship is clearly felt among graduates of Ivy League schools in the United States and to a lesser extent by top tier schools, the lifelong importance of a tight clique of graduates has become less important as the number of graduates grew, thus diluting the exclusivity of the tie. This type of collegial relationship is definitely found more frequently in the Middle East.

Activists operated within these collegial networks to benefit the cause and goals of their movement. These collegial network were not only important in strengthening their professional relationship with other activists or supportive professionals, they were also handy in connecting activists with government officials. Although I found numerous examples, I provide Sunni Ma□tre Iqbal Dughan's story as a clear proof of how these

networks functioned. She sought the assistance of the highest Sunni political authority in Lebanon, Prime Minister Fouad Seniora:

> Dughan: We were in college with important individuals. My husband studied Law in the Lebanese University and Commerce in the Arabic University. In the former his classmate was Nabih Berry and in the latter was Rafiq Hariri. I worked with Rafiq Hariri in the same movement. He was a truly committed person. Our political party's values were very strict in those days and very challenging intellectually…
>
> …
>
> Stephan: How did you reach Seniora?
>
> Dughan: Are you kidding? I know him since we were together in the Arab Nationalist party…
>
> Stephan: But?!
>
> Dughan: I know him since the days of Sheikh Rafiq Hariri
>
> Stephan: Did your personal relations with Seniora open the road or your name or your work or?
>
> Dughan: Both for sure. We also sent him a file to review
>
> Stephan: Officially or personally?
>
> Dughan: Look! Personal connection helps but this is an official matter at hand. I for sure and thank God have good credibility, so when my name appears politicians know that the subject is serious and honest. Praise God, praise God. It is a shame to praise myself but Praise God that I built my reputation and sacrificed a lot and was appreciated accordingly.

If Dughan's connection with the Prime Minister secured her a contact, the question is whether this was really to the benefit of her activism in the Lebanese Family Rights Network (LFRN), which she had established. As a representative of this Network (LFRN), she was working in alliance with other organizations in a campaign to pressure the confessional authorities to increase the duration of women's custody of their children until the age of 13 for boys and 15 for girls. Here is what Seniora did:

> Seniora sent the file that we provided him to a specialist and appointed the lady in charge of women's issues in his office to join our campaign. Officially, he said he would provide me with a letter indicating that custody issues are not within his jurisdiction but he expressed his willingness to help in any way he can. But I told him that giving us a letter is not enough. So he said: 'What else would you like me to do?' I said: it has to come from your mouth. He said: 'how?' I said: Talk to Durian (he is the supreme justice for the Sunni courts), and as a Prime Minister you can influence him (tmoun – تمون). He picked up the phone and told him: 'The ladies here are concerned with custody issues and I support them.' So Durian responded: 'Great! If you are with them that makes the two of us'. So Seniora asked him not to delay our request. I know he gave us lip service and that he is diluting our request but I believe that we won him on our side and we have our own people who will follow up with him.

As I mentioned in the Theory Chapter, Bourdieu suggests that social networks are the products of investment strategies, in which the "individual and collective, consciously or

unconsciously aimed at establishing or reproducing social relationships that are directly useable in the short or long term, that is, at transforming contingent relations, such as those of neighborhood, the workplace, or even kinship, into relationships that are at once necessary and elective, implying durable obligations subjectively felt (feelings of gratitude, respect, friendship, etc.) or institutionally guaranteed rights" (Bourdieu 1986: 249-50). Bourdieu is among the few theorists who are willing to accept "even kinship" as durable networks that can have benefits on the individual (See also Bernard 1971; 1973; 1987; Engels and Morgan 1972; Parsons and Bales 1955). Obviously, sociologists working with the assumption that kinship is completely confined to the private sphere were blind to its force. In Lebanon, however, this is impossible. So let us extend Bourdieu's shy endeavor to propose that kinship networks can have either a positive or negative impact on social movements. Kinship networks have a more than strategic relevance in women's activism. Membership in a kin group does sometimes afford activists direct access to authorities, depending on the kin group; however, this access is not automatic and does not work in all times and places for all activists. Just as kinship can be used as a channel to pressure political elites, it can be used in the opposite direction too. Kinship can be a form of connective social control.

Helou finds that female politicians with a political family heritage (Zoama) have used their strong internal and external networks to make advancements in their political careers. The internal networks are relationships they cultivate through either their family relations, their personal collegial networks or through opportunities that opened up because of their elevated social status. As kin groups often go through the same

educational nexuses, ties can tighten between kin members as well as between kin groups. Connectivity can thus be seen in terms of trajectories – a difference apparent to insiders, and oblique to outsiders. Famous and politically active families (Zoama) cultivate from an early age their girls' interests in politics (Helou 1998: 185). Furthermore, the extended family's class status determined women's chances in the Lebanese society especially among the elites and the intellectuals. The elites provided their daughters equal access to education, social and professional networks as they did with their sons. Although they could not provide access, educated and middle class families allowed their daughters the opportunity to participate in public activities to gain practical experience and enhance their public respectability early on in life.

The Zoama's external networks include political and cooperative relations they have established with ambassadors, foreign envoys, and international organizations (especially European and American) that have furthered their abilities to offer services to their kin's constituents. Furthering these service abilities allow Zoama women to "build strong popular bases not only among voters but also among other active sectors such as medical, financial and intellectual. The services that these NGOs provide become a tool and a valid source of power that candidates use to further their political aspirations," according to Helou (1998: 193). Princess Hayat Arslan, Rabab as-Sadr, Parliamentary Member (PM) Bahia Hariri, PM Nuhad Suaid and PH Nayla Moawad tour the world raising funds and strengthening ties with their regional and confessional constituents as explained by Suaid:

> I am a hard-worker and diligent in offering services and attending to people's needs and concerns. My motherhood helped me tremendously to sympathize with families and work to improve their conditions. I worked hard to educate their children by securing scholarships from foreign universities, and securing admission to public and technical schools. I was the only woman who had similar public and political influence as men.

Collective networks are also fundamental to determining opportunities of gaining public popularity and support. These networks influence kinship allegiance and endorsement (mubaya'a – مبايعة) (Helou 1998: 185). The patriarchal legacy demands that whenever possible in competition, families' mubaya'a or endorsement goes to males rather than females as their formal representatives. Helou states that "Some were lucky to receive the family's endowment (like Moawad and Suaid) which gave them a significant push among voters, the confession and in the region. But others were not as lucky to receive support from their families who gave their voices instead to male cousins to represent the family (as was the case with Zeina al-Ali and Norma Ferzli)" (Helou 1998: 185). The aggregate of these durable social networks, whether kinship or collegial, constitute the social capital that sociologists and political scientists see as an important element of voluntary engagement, political participation and civil society. So, how is this social capital accumulated?

2. Autonomous and Embedded Sources of Capital

There is a dualism on the surface of Lebanese women's rights activism. On the one side are those who adopted the autonomy-seeking ideologies of modernization and insisted on forswearing advantages they could reap from their kin group connections, thus beginning, as it were, with a zero degree of social capital and working their way up as individuals. Autonomous social capital building strategies involve three tactics: The first tactic is to get recognized for breaking social norms; the second tactic is pursuing higher educational training, which has the most individualistic bias. The third tactic is establishing their activist identity by working on the ground in unions and political parties.

The following are three examples of activists who broke social norms in speaking up, defying gender expectations and living unconventionally, showing that in Lebanon, social space is available for autonomous women, given the right circumstances. Early in life, Shiite Professor Azza Charara Beydoun sensed that the most significant influence she had on people was "being an exemplar of someone who is unconventional and successful." She uses her writing in the newspaper to speak her mind and show her dissidence. "I am not a sheep in the herd of any group. I once had an article published in the newspaper attacking the Shiites in Lebanon." Her boldness earned her the title the "wise rebel" according to her colleague Jihad Sneij, yet she claims that "at least I speak politely." Professor Beydoun is an example of taking advantage of the individualist or meritocratic opportunities of the educational system.

Whether Shiite Professor Mona Fayad's choices in life are bold or wise, polite or rebellious, she is definitely a non-conformist. For instance, she was the only divorced respondent I interviewed and she was labeled among her peers as the most radical. In my interview with her I wondered about the reasons behind the title, and indeed I was provided many reasons to believe the label. One of the examples I would like to share is Fayad's early awareness of the social world that surrounds her as well as her need to break free from it:

> Early in life I thought that I must begin my struggle. I wanted to experience life and to be independent; I wanted to earn my allowance instead of being given one. I got a job at Crown, a big chocolate factory, of which Jawz Khaalti (the husband of the sister of my mother) was in charge; I was fourteen when I worked there during that summer.

Although she used embedded means, the connection of her uncle, the ends were relatively autonomous.

Being bold is a tactic that Younan applies in a very public way in her lifestyle. Not many unmarried couple dare to cohabitate without being married in Lebanon or the Arab world. In fact, many would consider Younan's lifestyle to be sinful. However, she chose this "nontraditional lifestyle" and has been living with her boyfriend for twenty years without being married, knowing that they both are Christians and could easily get married in any Christian church, they both maintained their stance on the subject.

Stephan: Did your choice create an embarrassment for your family?

> Younan: For sure 100%; it is an embarrassment for all people. The neighbors still don't say hello to me because my deviant lifestyle. It is not easy to live my life in the open, someone like me with a significant role in the society. But this isn't matter of temperament.

The Lebanese feminist culture is rich with examples of women who decided to take the bold, daring and autonomous path to activism. While this boldness can be explained by examining personal and social reasons, as one notices from the three activists above, education was major contributor to the level of autonomy they achieved.

Education, the second tactic, not only expands the social and economic availability to women, but operates to raise awareness. Educated women gain a stronger awareness of the social injustice that arises out of inequality. They can see the discrepancy between their own empowering family environments and the social inequalities they witness in the community around them. Maronite Laure Moghaizel stated that her childhood environment shaped her consciousness and commitment to human rights:

> Since childhood, I was raised on equality at home. Rather, it was favoritism toward girls over the boys to compensate for society's injustice and to prepare the girls to face this injustice. In witnessing my father practice his job as a public servant, I grew up respecting the state and its laws. My parents sacrificed themselves so I could enjoy the best education in the best schools. I became aware of the magnificence of their sacrifice and I carried my indebtedness to them as a necklace around my neck (Laure Moghaizel in Chkeir 2002: 11).

When discussing education, activists are not as concerned with the substance of it - pursuing an advanced college degrees, for instance – but the lifestyles in the cultural milieu associated with it. Helou feels that her sojourn in the United States for six years as a graduate student taught her financial independence and responsibility. Moawad points that enrichment programs like the girl scouts fostered her leadership skills, “the scout was a very good school for leadership. When I was 17, I was in charge of scouts of the Lazarette Franciscan School. I was the youngest among all the leaders. But this prepared me in leadership.” Finally, Catholic Linda Mattar, who had to leave school at the age of 12, learned a lot about herself as she insisted on continuing her education at night while working in a socks factory, then in a silk factory. In this way educational pursuit was more than just the accumulation of knowledge, but, as well, training in independence and overcoming personal challenges.

The third category of building capacities is activism and advocacy in unions, political parties and the women’s movement. Some intellectuals and activists who have worked on “the ground” for many years, volunteering their personal time and money and reaping little or no personal benefits, gain tremendous respect. Other activists have gained recognition internationally for their NGO and international foundation work. This international recognition has produced a domino effect locally and allowed those working through their organization to reach the public by holding campaigns, organizing conferences, and participating in international initiatives.

Autonomous tactics that help build activists' personal capacities— through education, their activist networks, and their personal approach to activism—are as significant as embedded approaches that kinship networks provide. One advantage of being embedded in kinship networks is earning social capital that provides economic resources as well as trustworthiness. The question is how women's rights activists have utilized kinship networks, which are founded on patriarchy and the subordination of women, to allow it to be changed from the inside?

Kinship and social status in Lebanon are closely linked, as I have shown in the Kinship Chapter. Social status is not determined by educational attainments but by the wealth and the reputation of the kin group. Membership in a kin group then is a positional power. Large and influential families tend to be well organized and recognized in the society. Arslan feels that her family name has not only helped her social work but also gained her respect among other Arab royals:

> People accepted me because the name of the Arslan and even when I used to go for exhibitions in the Arab world, it did help a lot because you know, princess, the Arslans princes and they care a lot in the Arab world because they are princes and Sheikhs and kings. It really did open doors for me unexpected and I used to use the name in a very nice way. Yes, I am like you, so you cannot treat me as if I am coming to beg something. You are a princess I am a princess. It used to help a lot, even in Lebanon it used to help a lot.

Helou notes the positive aspect of kinship-generated social capital that comes about when the rich and powerful families divide labor internally by assigning different roles to the

various members. She shows that in the Hariri family, for example, Bahia Hariri was encouraged to enter politics to support her brother, the former Prime Minister, while her other brother was groomed for business management. Hence, Hariri's participation in politics was an extension to rather than a conflict with her brother's political aspirations. This system erects important constraints on women's recognized political power.

Second, trust is family name-based. Women use the family name as a currency generating access, credibility and recognition. This can be a constraint on certain women but others benefit from the trust generated by the history of their kin group and its surrounding community. When male kin members are absent, as I will show, this can lead to power devolving to women (the women-in-black phenomenon). Sunni Nora Jumblat believes that the Druze community in Lebanon forgave her Syrian origin and her Sunni Muslim religion because she carried "her husband's word" and fulfilled the leadership role that the Jumblats have played for many generations. Orthodox Professor Lamia Rustum Shehadeh was personally proud of her family name while her father's name, Asad Rustum, the great historian of the Antioch Church who was well recognized among people (even at Harvard where he obtained his Ph.D. with high distinction), gave her some recognition in the academic world that carried even when she was at Harvard. Druze Aida Nassrallah claims that in her mountainous region, her family name opens many doors for her. A person she calls uncle (*ami*), the son of the brother of the father of her father, was a general in the army, a minister in 1975, and a good Lebanese role model. In addition, Hussein Nassrallah was an army commissioner who is well known for chasing criminals and outlaws; his name still scares many people.

Women benefit from this kinship form of social capital, but they contribute to it as well. Sadr claims that while her family name opened many doors for her in her activism, it was her own credibility and hard work that allowed these doors to stay open. In a different context, Shiite Professor Fadia Hoteit argues that women's high attainments in the various professional fields have encouraged families to further their daughters' educational and work attainments. "Some families feel proud of having female members in important positions. For instance, in Beit Hoteit [the Hoteit family], my aila [my family], Beit Ami [my uncle's family], the daughter of my father's brother [my cousin] is a pilot. When they list their children's accomplishments, they mention that she is a captain and that is a source of pride for them."

Social capital associated with kinship has both positive and negative impacts, depending on the value of the family reputation. When I asked my respondents whether the family name and connections has opened doors for them, Jumblat responded that she feels that her name has closed a few doors. "You have the people who are with Jumblat and you have the people who are still against Jumblat." Likewise, Maronite Ma□tre Mary Rose Zalzal warned that name recognition can have negative consequences on the individual:

> Zalzal: For instance you know Maggie?
>
> Stephan: She is a relative
>
> Zalzal: If someone does not like Maggie, you would never be able to talk to that person.

Stephan: So does that means that the connections are more important than the person?

Zalzal: I think that the connections are important but not everywhere and not in all cases. Wouldn't your business run much smoother if you get introduced?

Stephan: Sure and familial connections matter there as well

Zalzal: Family connections are a way of passing the trust to another person. This connectivity is present in work relations, family relations and personal relations as well.

Women's rights activists in the embedded group lead a mass—rather than elite—movement, one that can represent the struggle of 52%[37] of the Lebanese population, and thus tend to rely on weak ties such as collegial, professional and kinship ties. They work within rather than outside their social and kinship network and they do not seek out depersonalized spaces, or flaunt their autonomy. Yet they are not autonomy averse. They obtain social capital from autonomous as well as embedded sources – this is why education is so important - and they mobilize autonomous as well as embedded networks to advance women's rights and integrate its activists. How do women's rights groups, and activists, find "elbow room" within their lives and social niches to create equality-centered strategies? Let me turn next to examine these individual strategies.

[37] http://www.nationmaster.com/time.php?stat=peo_pop_fem_of_tot-people-population-female-of-total&country=le-lebanon.

C. Individual Strategies

This section addresses the under-researched and under-theorized pattern of the tactics that individuals adopt to build their personal capacities. The literature on personal strategies in social movement literature is minimal, while feminist literature discusses them mostly under the aegis of processes of identification with the movement (Ferree and Martin 1995; Hercus 2005; Naples and Bojar 2002). This section asks how do activists participate: "Participation in collective action is seen to have no value for the individual unless it provides a direct response to personal needs" as a "path to changing the world and to seeking meaningful alternatives" (Melucci et al. 1989: 49). Addressing personal needs and conditions and finding appropriate responses to these needs involve interpersonal strategizing. These individual strategies describe actions that facilitate women's ability to leave their house and engage, not in profitable public activity, but in contentious collective action.

Jasper justifies why social movement scholars mostly refrain from addressing the impact of personal "biographies" on collective behavior:

> Individuals, with their idiosyncrasies, neuroses, and mistakes, are troublesome for social science. If each protest movement is composed of individuals with varying biographies, drives, and goals, and if each individual has many motivations, some of them hidden even to herself, what can we say about the roots of protest? Rationalists ignore this challenge through oversimplification of human psychology; mobilization theorists respond similarly, downplaying the importance of mental life altogether. General theories by definition try to exclude the

> complexity of individual variations, or they assume them to be random noise in the system, as rationalists do (and some individuals play a more weighty role in history than others, of course, and deserve study for that reason) (Jasper 1997: 216).

Noting here a persistent assumption that the individual in question must be the autonomous, detached individual of Western society, operating outside of the family, my findings suggest that the nuclear family accompanies activists through various stages of their activist lives. In the early years, family members help activists form their identity as I have shown in the chapter on becoming activists; and during adulthood, they empower them, support them in advancing their goals, and create opportunities for them. The following will investigate how women strategize within their nuclear family settings to gain the ability to do their activist and political work. I herein examine five different tactics: I call the first one being superwomen, to describe how a number of women insisted on succeeding both as feminine, housewives and working/active women. The second tactics is shifting one's role from care-giver to care manager. The third tactic is joining "the club of empty-nesters," a term I use to describe late-stage entry into the sphere of activism at the end of childrearing years. Fourth is entering politics in the absence or in lieu of an available male kin member, or women-in-black, a tactic reserved for the political elite. And finally, working in partnership with one's husband, probably the most important and common tactic.

1. SUPERWOMEN

Using tactics that American women applied in the fifties and sixties, Lebanese activists integrate their gender roles as mothers and wives along with their passion for activism and commitment to being productive. Like American women of the Sixties, most Lebanese women strived to balance between their family, which assume absolute first priority, and their activism. The family's presence and help is the most important condition for this form of activism. However, unlike the situation of women in the American social context, where the help of extended family was unlikely and the use of domestic servants was rarer, Lebanese women could often rely on a large network of support, husbands, mothers, and other female kin members, children as well as domestic help and service-oriented economy. The disadvantage of these criteria is that they in themselves filtered out a proletariat element from the movement.

Lebanon has a rich history of highly organized women, of which one of the most notable, in the contemporary era, was Laure Moghaizel, who is considered a role model for many contemporary activists. Laure's daughter, Nada, describes her as "many women in one." Not only was she a famous lawyer and an activist, she was also "an excellent mother and cook, and an elegant, perfumed, and sophisticated woman" (Interview with Nada Moghaizel in March 2002 in Beirut, Lebanon Chkeir 2002: 19). She always looked sharp and often wore a pearl necklace and white gloves in the summer and black gloves in the winter, according to Orthodox Amal Dibo, Laure's close associate. But Laure did not do it alone; she had the love and support of her husband, the frequent pitching-in of her mother, and up to two servants at times. The majority of the activists I met paid detailed

attention to their makeup, hair and nails as well as the perfume they put on and the designer clothes they wore at the several occasions at which I saw them. They looked elegant and professional in their appearance.

These women paid great attention to their roles as wives in many ways, which may seem traditional and oppressive from the American feminist perspective; from the Lebanese perspective, it is unconventional. The routinization of marriage tends to dampen the romantic touch, and few women would think of their husbands as guests of honors, especially after five children and so many years of marriage.

Motherhood and childrearing are very important to Lebanese activists as well. As I discussed in the Kinship Chapter, Lebanese women ultimately aspire to become wives and mothers, as they are taught through their formal education and informal socialization. This hegemonic belief motivates women to strive firstly to fulfill their domestic responsibilities and, secondly, to view their educational attainment in the light of this overriding goal. Motherhood is a master identity that they are willing to sacrifice a lot in order to fulfill. Failing as a mother is not an option that Shiite Rima Fakhry is willing to accept, but she also recognizes that not all women are capable of juggling life and career:

> It is my personal belief that the woman must, must, must succeed in building a healthy family. If she reaches a stage where she cannot balance, then having a family is more important than working. This is my personal belief. But I also believe that this has to do with talents and personality, called good management. Sometimes, stay-at-home mothers could spend all day with their children but not

> benefit them. But if she can only spend one, two or three hours; then she knows that she needs to manage her time with her children. She also knows how to manage her absence from the home.

Two major tactics are special features of the Lebanese women's movement: The flexible approach to *time* and the alternative fulfillment of *space*. Among the activists, there are surprisingly few who believe that they are time deprived. Nor is there the view that the time taken by their most important roles, being mothers, is somehow lost. Time accounting here is more long-term. As we saw in the Kinship Chapter, Hoteit could accept a temporary interruption in her dreams, and even her daughter's future career and scholarship, for the sake of the children.

Second, as noted by Fakhry, the trick that some Lebanese activists mastered was in managing space during their absence. Fadi, Laure's youngest of five, describes his mother's management of her absence. He claims that he never felt left behind despite his mother's extensive work and travel: "We don't feel there's a *manque*[38] of something, no on the contrary. She gave a lot of affection, maybe it was the intensity at the same moment, maybe not [hugging us for] half an hour, but fifteen minutes but very intense, so it made the difference if you want. None of us feel that we were either neglected or we did not spend enough time with our parents."

[38] *Manque* is French for loss or deprivation.

When these women are away, they are still present by proxy, planning the care of their children and their families. At times, and in different families, there are husbands who take up the slack. Linda Matter, for instance, sees her husband as an exemplary support in facilitating her absence from the house and their three children in order to conduct her activism. “He used to cover up my absence. He was never away from the house when I was not there. He knew and was convinced of what I was doing.” But women usually have more than their husband’s relief efforts to rely upon: other mothers and older children are as important a source for household aid. Activists feel that they have permission to travel or work because their mothers, sisters, aunts or even mothers-in-law are there to take on unpaid roles as caretakers. For instance, Sunni Afifa al-Said used to leave her children with her mother-in-law when she needed to study or participate in a protest.

Secondly, women were able to be absent from the home because their own children assured them that they were all right. For instance, Orthodox Anita Nassar explains her situation: “Your children would not mind having supper alone or fixing themselves something because you haven’t had the time, the day before you were still stuck here. Okay? This facilitates. When they tell you, it’s okay mom when you go for 20 days to do the training. Okay, this is part of your work and you have to go and they don’t make you feel bad when you come back. You know?”

When they refuse the help of available family resources, some women have found that the superwoman role began to tell on their health and well being. Nassar describes how

she would sometimes let her husband sleep and then get up, working until 4:30 in the morning cooking, sweeping, mopping, and washing. Rafif Sidawi applied similar tactics: "I picked up the habit of staying up to late hours to steal time. I thought then that I am taking that time away from my own account rather than my family. I deprived myself my biological right of sleep, which no living creature can live without" (Sidawi 2004: 661).

There were other instances to note the failure of these tactics and there was some recognition of this in the activist community. Beydoun accepted certain limits on her ability to be with her children. She found that despite her daughters' complaints about her absence, they eventually learned to "enjoy their time together and enjoy indoor activities, they would draw, play music. So they had things to do." Similarly, Amal Dibo, Laure Moghaizel's closest associate, admits that when Laure and Joseph had to institutionalize their son Naji, who had Down syndrome, their action "was taken against her for a while." And many people felt that as a mother, she should have taken care of her son-in-need instead. That guilt took a toll on Laure but still did not stop her. In the same vein, Maronite Lora Sfeir's guilt towards others disappointed her in herself and frustrated her not only because she did not spend enough time in her view with her children, but also with her mother: "I cannot give sufficient time to my young daughter and my mother who is visiting me from America. Now, I cannot give enough time to them although now they are older. If they were younger, I would feel a greater guilt. Now I feel little guilt because I use every opportunity to compensate them for my absence." However, some women who totally devoted their time to being mothers gradually felt the sense of guilt towards self capturing them and motivating their quest for social activism. Sidawi was not content

with the praises she received for being a supermom, “My sacrifice in serving my family earned me the praise of others and I succeeded in playing the typical role of women which is embedded in the consciousness and unconsciousness of our society” (Sidawi 2004: 661). These praises did not keep her away from joining one of the most radical advocacy groups to fight against domestic violence.

2. From Caregivers to Care-Managers

As I have already mentioned in the Kinship Chapter, activists have tried to transform the gendered public and private representation of women from care-givers to care-managers. The difference plays out between an economy of giving “natural” to women to one of control chosen by women. The popular term “Madame of the House” indicates her supervisory authority over all daily matters, while connecting her closely with the household. Within the Lebanese family structure, male members are traditionally regarded as the breadwinners, handling the family’s formal business, while female members take control of the family’s informal business and social relations.

> Arslan: Women make the social relations, women always. Sometimes it’s the children at school. They bring together the families, but most of the times, it’s the women.
>
> Stephan: You only visit other women?
>
> Arslan: No, we establish the relations and then our husbands follow. That’s what I was telling you that women do not feel oppressed. If the wife doesn’t want, if it is the president of the republic, he cannot enter your house. We are the queens of

> our families and our houses. We are the queens, men do not interfere, but outside we do our thing…

The "Madame" is a supervisory and managerial position within the household. The second tactic takes advantage of this to coordinate rather than execute menus, schedules, social relations and exchanges; this position is supported as well by a service-oriented economic system. Take for instance grocery shopping. The maid could prepare the shopping list; once the Madame approves it either the maid goes to the grocery store to purchase the items or the Madame calls the grocer to send the items with delivery boys on motorcycles. Maids do the cleaning, and most food preparation is either done by maids or brought from restaurants that have inexpensive catering services. When my children wanted happy meals from McDonalds while in Beirut, I picked one of three choices, send the kids with the maid to eat there; send the maid to buy the happy meal; or place a deliver order for a $1 extra. All of these were easy enough options. When Al-Said does not have time to cook, her husband readily says, "don't worry, I will stop by Goodies and order lunch for the family."

The management aspect of care is best described in al-Said's words: "My responsibility is to delegate tasks, not to sacrifice myself." Note that her conviction in the reasons to delegate task is centered on changing the beliefs of the next generation: "If I perpetuate this sacrificing image, then I would be reproducing the message that my daughter will

imitate and my son will believe." The ability to manage her household becomes a measure by which women's public management skills are judged.[39]

3. EMPTY NESTERS

Motivated by their devotion to winning the battle at home in raising children, some women waited until their children grew older before they launched their activist careers. Because of the closer ties, these Empty Nesters are not entirely comparable to their American counterparts. Nevertheless, they are older women who have blocks of freed up time to devote to politics or women's rights. These women have gained prestige through fulfilling their family duties wholeheartedly, and their voices are consequently taken seriously. Also, they have usually acquired a social status that grants them respectability for their motherhood. Ironically, their age and their adherence to social norms allow them to take advantage of what Joseph has called "patriarchal connectivity" (1997a) to advance a politics of women's rights. Take for instance Arslan's opinion on where and when her fight for rights starts:

> I believe that first of all, we have to give our children their rights and then we'll be able to fight for others' rights. First we begin with our family and then we can. Because we have to be, start at home, very good to your family then you can be very good to the others. You know I cannot image I can lose any of my children to be a drug addict or to be molested by others, I cannot. I have to be very close to them. Children first and then everything comes second. I want my family first and then everything else comes next.

[39] A measure that some held against Hillary Clinton's for her failure to manage her household and her husband's fidelity.

Many studies have shown that Lebanese women do not participate actively in political life before a certain age. The delay, according to Helou, "is partially due to women's occupation with fertility, reproduction, forming a family, and the demands and responsibilities of married life' but also because time helps women "to settle down and reach a level of maturity and self-confidence" (Helou 1998: 180). Among the women I interviewed, six waited for their children to grow before they engaged in public service whereas the majority, sixteen, did not interrupt their activism despite having kids (the rest did not have children or were single). Beydoun found that age was more relevant to welfare organizations than advocacy groups:

> I found that the pattern in welfare organization, many women initially are not interested in public issues. Those who do, leave during their reproductive years to have children. Then, when they are about 35 years of age, they become interested in their community so they start working on welfare issue. However, the advocacy groups, activism never stops. You find the new generation and the older. To the contrary, young people are heavily involved in NGOs.

In the political arena female politicians follow a similar pattern. In the 1992 election, two female candidates were in their forties and two in their fifties and one in her late thirties. In 1996, one female candidate was over seventy, two over sixty, five in their fifties, two in their forties (one single), and only one in her late thirties (single as well). Before the civil war, most of the female candidates were between 40 and 50 years old, with the exception of Nuhad Suaid and Mirna Bustani who were both in their early thirties (Helou

1998: 181). Suaid was a widow who sought her husband's seat and Mirna replaced her father.

The age of female political candidates indicates that some women often undergo a certain activist latency, whilst they raise their children. By the time they become active, then, they are middle aged or further on, and so are their husbands. So it is no surprise that the death of certain politically powerful men should open space for their wives to succeed them. Their wives, after all, have also succeeded, along with their husbands, in the system of patriarchal connectivity.

4. WOMEN-IN-BLACK

The women-in-black is the fourth tactic that women apply in their strategies. As I mentioned in the Theory Chapter, The "women in black" is idiosyncratic manner to describe the way in which some women enter politics, wearing black as they mourn their late powerful husbands. It is not uncommon in the United States for the same thing to happen, or for a woman to use a name made famous by a husband to gain office. Helou, in Lebanon, tested the applicability of the Lebanese slogan that "women enter the parliament only when they are dressed in black [i.e. widows]" to the 1996 elections and found that five female candidates were married, four were widows, one was divorced and two were single.

According to Freeman (2000), political widows had the most advantages of all women interested in politics. They had their husbands' prior "status, name, and good will with

the independence to forge [their] own path" (Freeman 2000: 64). In Zalzal's opinion, Nayla Moawad (the widow of the late President René Moawad) was wise to build on her husband's reputation and speak in his name: "She was active and present on the grounds and she played the traditional game anyway. Every time she gives a speech, she speaks in the name of her husband, as his representative."

Political wives, as I have pointed out before, are a phenomenon in American politics as well. The majority of the current female Lebanese Parliamentarians has held, or is holding, seats for their sons as expressed by Moawad:

> Of course, my son Michel was present but he was too young to take on the leadership. Until he was to reach an appropriate age to lead them, they trusted me because I have always been present and active in their communities.

In the upcoming elections, Lebanese political analysts project that Solenge Gemayel will leave her seat to her son Nadeem, Moawad to her son Michel and Strida Geagea to her recently-released husband Samir.

5. PARTNERSHIP WITH MEN

Helou concludes that both the "lack of a spouse" and the "lack of the spousal objection" are equally significant in advancing women's pursuit of political power. Husbands who did not object to their wives political and activist achievements and recognitions were usually "self-confident and personally successful" according to Helou. Hence, she concludes that as the husband's achievements and confidence increase his objection to his wife's advancement decreases (Helou 1998: 182). As "only 26 women competed in

parliamentary elections between the years 1953 and 2000" in Lebanon (Zaatari 2005: 155), Helou's conclusion indicates that a very small minority of men are secure enough to encourage their wives' political careers. Getting husbands' approval, support and partnership is the fifth tactic that women applied in their activist and political life.

Traditionally, a husband will limit a woman's opportunity for entering into the centers of power, for financial, social and political reasons. But in Lebanon, and other Middle Eastern societies, women who obtain their husband's support also earn social acceptance. In these, and similar, societies where women are perceived as legal dependents on their husbands, activists have a lot to gain from showing the full approval of their husbands even as they work to dissolve the bonds and images of legal dependence. This cultural aspect was significant to activists and scholars as they worked together with their male partners to advance women's rights.

What kind of background gave activists the confidence to claim support for their work from their husbands? My data demonstrate two patterns: in the first case, female empowerment stems from relationships with the father or the brother. In the second case, just the opposite is true, but the woman, lacking support within her father's home, refuses to countenance that negative model with her husband. Whether continuing a legacy forged with her father or not activists' partnership with their husband was manifested by some combination of the following: a) working together in social activism; b) receiving encouragement for their work; c) support and substituting in fulfilling domestic roles; and d) sharing beliefs.

If we can extend this argument to include shared beliefs in women's rights, partnership with the husband can be viewed as an essential element of couples' civic involvement. Hence, having a "feminist husband" or a "feminist's husband" not only defines the couples' gender ideology but may also define their activism (Greenstein 1996; Pina and Bengtson 1993). The ideal case is the Moghaizels'. Joseph Moghaizel considered himself an advocate for women's rights, according to his son, Fadi, "he always worked with her [Laure] on women's rights and he helped pass laws at the end in this respect of course. He was the head of the human right committee at the Parliament which he established. It did not existed before. And of course he helped her a lot."

Following in the footsteps of the Moghaizels, seven out of the twenty-five married activists worked together with their spouses to advance women's rights and their civic engagement. For instance, Dughan describes her marriage as a true partnership: "we were a beautiful couple that very few people could replicate. Not only we were loving spouses, we were partners in the true meaning of the word, partners in our national struggles and in our professional work." Another example is Younan's lifetime partnership with her boyfriend Walid:

> I feel that I have a special identity. There are hundreds of young adults to whom Walid and I are role models. They imitate our looks, our dresses and our speaking style. If you read their writings, your literally see our words embedded in them. Walid and I became a phenomenon in Lebanon especially due to our behavior and how we implement our ideals.

Additionally, twenty-four out of the thirty women I interviewed discuss receiving support or encouragement from their husband. Of the rest, five were single and one did not feel that her husband's support was influential. It is noteworthy that most of the women came to the marriage as activists, which is a role they insisted on keeping as a condition for marriage, as Nada Majed, a Shiite member of the Women's Democratic Gathering, expressed:

> This was my primary condition… This was the first point. I was in the Gathering already and I told him that I am now an employee there. I had just started. But I told him that this is my path in life and that I didn't want him to come one day and say no to me. I said that if he tries to stop me from continuing my struggle, then our relationship could not continue and that I would consider that as sign to end our relation. On the contrary, he supports my ideas...

Similarly, Nassrallah who had been active for ten years in the League of Lebanese Women's Rights before she got married, told her husband from the beginning of their courtship:

> We agreed on me being a high school teacher and an activist in the League of Women's Rights. After reaching the position of the cultural relations officer between the mountains and Beirut, I told him that we are still at the beginning of the road. Even though we liked each other, I did not want these two goals to interfere with each other. I said: "Don't even imagine that I would ever leave my job even if you become a billionaire," because I believe in women's work. And secondly, I said: "I am an activist for women's rights. I do not accept anyone telling me one day to stop my activism. I am a social activist and only if I decide

> to stop, would I stop. So let us agree now before we get more involved." He of course agreed not only because he wanted me, but because he also shared my convictions.

These two examples show a firm determination and confidence, which are evidently confirmed by the course of their marriage. Amal Dibo—Laure's closest follower—claims that many of the Lebanese governing class are becoming like the Moghaizels. "We have couples like this, look at Ghassan Tueni and his wife, Mona Herawi and her husband the Late President Herawi, Elham Kallab and her husband, Mona Khalaf and if her husband was to live longer… Many couples tried to do the same: Alice Kayrouz and her husband, you should try to see her. Alice Kayrouz was with us in the association. She and her husband, they tried to do the same thing but they don't have the charisma."

Activists claimed that they were not only aided passively by the approval of their husbands, but that they were also empowered by them. This isn't to say that husbands used the full extent of their social capital for their wives, but they did use enough to help them realize their own potentials and form their own discourse. The conjugal relationship as represented by my informants is one of negotiation in relationship to the un-negotiable constant of advocating for women's rights, which is personalized as a life task with which the activist identifies. Caroline Slaibi, a Maronite member of the Women's Democratic Gathering, most eloquently describes her husband's role as:

> My husband plays a major role in my life and in crystallizing my critical thinking. He certainly helped me discover how to analyze and criticize. I started feeling that I have someone supportive in my own home. We love each other a lot. He is an

educated, cultured, and profound human being.

The husband's support also indicated a high level of trust in his wife, her action and her mission. In responding to my inquiry on the most supportive person in her family, Nora Jumblat – the Sunni wife of Lebanon's most prominent Druze figure— said:

> I could say my husband was very supportive. He was very supportive because he… he let me do it, he did not interfere basically. Interfere very little and I think he was very positive and never asked questions; never interfered in anything; never asked about anything. And that I suppose, in the Middle East, is a very supportive attitude. Just by itself, without interfering, is very supportive act. This trust, I think was very important.

As women described their husbands' support, I could not resist asking them whether they considered their husbands as feminists. To that Afifa al-Said responded:

> Said: I have an egalitarian marriage. My husband has been conscience of women's rights before marrying me.
>
> Stephan: Is he a feminist?
>
> Said: He is a feminist even before me. Before I became engaged in the struggle for women's rights, he was a member of the pilot union. When a woman from the Yemein family applied to join their union, other members rejected her application. He raised hell! He raised hell saying "How could you prevent her from joining? Isn't she a human being like you? Doesn't she have the same degree as you do? Isn't she entitled to the same constitutional rights as you? You

may not discriminate against her!" He finally won and they conceded and realized that they could not discriminate based on gender.

Spousal support comes in various forms. There is the sharing of household chores, there is the guidance in maneuvering in the civil and political worlds, and there is the access to political and social organizations. However, perhaps the most highly valued support is emotional:

> Nassar: You know? When your husband tells you don't you worry about anything, I will take care of everything.
>
> Stephan: what kind of husband does it take to say that?
>
> Nassar: Someone that loves you.
>
> Stephan: Only?
>
> Nassar: Number one yes. Someone that sees that you're happy at your work and you want to reach somewhere. He does this because he loves you to start with, the basic point is love. He loves you and he appreciates you: What you are and what you're becoming.

D. Conclusion

In order to examine individual activist strategies, I posed the question, how were activists able to participate in the women's rights movement? By "how," I am pointing to means, not motives or goals but rather strategies and tactics. First, I showed that through connectivity, activists who possessed meaningful kinship and collegial networks bridged weak social ties by connecting to other horizontal and vertical networks. The nexus of

connectivity for autonomy favoring activists was their collegial and professional positions, while activists pursuing more embedded means use weak ties within their kinship networks to benefit their representation work on behalf of the cause and goals of the women's movement. The aggregate of these durable social networks, whether kinship or collegial, constitute the social capital that sociologists and political scientists see as an important element of voluntary engagement, political participation and civil society. Kinship networks, which are an afterthought for Western theorists of social capital, are a significant set of networks to consider for the Lebanese woman's rights movement, as my sample shows. In this way, activists obtain social capital doubly - from autonomous as well as embedded sources – and they use it doubly – to advance individual rights and autonomy and alter embedded family roles.

Second, I have given an overview of how women were able and empowered to leave their home and daily activities to join the women's movement. While some activists were skillful in organizing time and space, many of them solicited support from family members. The economically privileged cadre, delegated tasks associated with caring for the family to domestic help, and also, received help from husbands, relatives and children (which most activists relied on regardless of their social status or community origin).

Activists in my sample considered women's rights as collective benefits, which Amenta and Young (1999: 40) describe as "groupwise goods from which it is difficult to exclude group members—the greater the value and type of such goods achieved by any challenge or challenger, the greater the impact." Activists benefited from the advocacy for women's

rights as collective benefits as much as they contributed to it. My larger goal is to show how, on the grassroots level, we cannot transpose the autonomy-centered goals of Western feminists into the making of activists in Lebanon. These activists operate within, and not against, their kinship networks, producing the kind of woman's rights movement that may seem extremely strange to Western eyes.

CHAPTER SIX: ORGANIZATIONAL AND MOBILIZING STRATEGIES

A. Introduction

In investigating how Lebanese women's rights activists use their kinship system in their pursuit of rights, I argue that on the collective level, women's rights organizations mobilize resources, frame their demands and recruit participants within the boundaries set by kinship norms. We have seen that activists choose on a personal level to either use their kinship-generated social capital or to opt for more autonomous behaviors. On the organizational level, they adopt a mix of autonomous and embedded tactics. They seek autonomy by electing autonomous leadership, pursuing independent funding sources, and generating connective spaces for women's activism. Organizations that are accepting of the embedded route thereby avoid certain confrontations with the confessional apparatus, and present themselves as pursuing endogenous Lebanese values. To do this, they first search and find elbow room within the kinship system to operate in, and then use that space to transform key social values associated with patriarchy.

In the following I show that regardless of their stance on the significance of their family to their activism, activists tend to use both embedded and autonomous tactics, depending on which one seems optimal in the circumstances, in order to negotiate for advancing their movement's goals. I examine the demands that Lebanese women claim in relation to the three political structures that affect them: the state, the church and kinship. By embedding their demands in the kinship system, I illustrate the claim-making of Lebanese women's rights organizations using two leading issues: Full political rights and

representation and legal reforms. Next, I investigate how women integrate behavioral norms set by the kinship system in building their movements internally and externally. Internal to organization strategies are issues such as mechanisms for choosing leaders and administering the organization. Some leaders are embedded in kinship networks, others manage to follow autonomous paths to their activism; some organization structures are set up to resemble patriarchal family structure, others have highly specialized positions; some mix use of space between family and organizations, others keep the two spheres separate. In their external organizational strategies, some use kinship (including symbolic kinship) networks to generate funds for their organizations, others seek independent or international sources; some gain access through the social capital that they generate from kinship networks, and others form activist coalitions to gain influence in the public sphere. Finally, I analyze the tactics that activists apply to frame their movement as embedded in family relations and values (marriage, motherhood, childhood and fatherhood) in order to transform them into vehicles for empowerment.

B. Claim Making and Demands

This section discusses the nature of the discrimination against which women's organizations fight. As I have mentioned, I use Laure Moghaizel's fivefold categorization of women's rights issues as a rough guide: political rights, legal competency, economic and social rights, punitive laws, and the Personal Status law (Moghaizel 1985). Since its independence, Lebanon has been legally committed to advancing women's civil, economic and political rights. Legal decrees issued by the state, such as the Constitution, have been intentionally created to be fairly gender-neutral

in their terminology; treating all Lebanese citizens on equal basis. However, the extension of women's rights in the public sphere falls under the jurisdiction of at least three institutions: the State, confessions, and kin groups; whereas women's rights in the private sphere are strictly dictated by kin groups and their reinforcing allies, the confessions.

In general, when it is a matter of some policy that arises from the direct relationship of women and the state, laws tend to be fairer and more neutral, e.g. extending social security benefits to women. In more complex matters involving the confession or the kinship structure vis-à-vis the state in regards to women's issues, supremacy is given to either of these structures over women's rights. Moreover, when matters involved confessions and kin groups jointly, the state generally renounces its interest in the woman's cause, as is the case with the family law. Sometimes religious clergy intervene on behalf of woman, but most of the time, confessions and kin groups form alliances that legitimate each other and victimize women. In analyzing the claim-making of women's rights in Lebanon, I focus on two themes: political representation and legal justice.

1. POLITICAL REPRESENTATION AND RIGHTS

The political demands of the women's movement in Lebanon focus on two major areas: women's 30% quota representation in national parliament and local governments and granting women the right to pass their citizenship status onto their spouses and/or children (Charafeddine 2004; Helou 1998; Moghaizel 2000). Overall, Lebanese women's rights organizations have a less rigid legal structure to confront than is the case

in most other Middle Eastern states; Lebanon officially gives jurisdictional authority to international treaties if they come into conflict with national law. However, many of the issues addressed in The United Nations' Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) are not mentioned in the Lebanese law, which indicates ways in which Lebanon still lags behind the progressive CEDAW agenda, for instance. This gives woman's rights organizations a clear mission: to agitate both for the enforcement of existing law and compliance with that part of the CEDAW agenda.

In this regards, several organizations work to implement and enforce CEDAW's recommendations of the 30% quota representation in the national parliament and local governments. After the UN Beijing Conference, two organizations were formed for this purpose: *The National Commission for Lebanese Women* as an official governmental organization headed by Lebanon's First Lady, who is currently Wafa Suleiman; and, *the National Committee for the Follow Up of Women's Issues*, a non-profit organization headed by two professors. Other work has been done on these issues by such organizations as the League of Lebanese Women (headed by Linda Mattar) and Women's Political Empowerment Committee (headed by Princess Hayat Arslan). Linda Mattar explains the process of the proposed reform as follows:

> "There is one matter, we must be realistic. The parliament consists of 128 deputies. If 20 women arrive at the parliament that means that 20 men must leave and each is going to be worried about his position, until we finally have a law that guarantees women's entering the parliament. Beijing recommended the quota system for women as a temporary transition until women are able to prove

> themselves within the parliament... We presented our proposal to the Parliament and to the National Commission. Our proposal does not only concern women, it is rather a comprehensive proposal. So, the deputies stated that in accordance with Beijing, they will grant women 30% representation in nomination for political seats. No. Beijing's recommendations are for 30% of the seats in the parliament, not 30% of the nominations! Electoral lists can consist of 30% women… but women's names can go at the bottom of the list. When the electoral list wins, women may not be selected because they choose from the top of the list. We suggested that we do like they did in Belgium, to alternate women and men's names on the list."

While the quota campaign does not enjoy wide public support or attention, I believe that it would be easier to achieve than the other demands because it is not confrontational in its claim-making with the two major social structures in Lebanon: kinship and confessions. The quota system would allow confessions, villages and kin groups to nominate women (from the same class as the pool of men – the elite), if and only if, elite men are willing to open a space for women to govern. Given the privileges that informally accrue to upper class families in Lebanon, quotas in representation may be easier to achieve than full civil rights.

The Lebanese Constitution grants women political rights such as citizenship, election, nomination and assuming political positions. Every Lebanese citizen over the age of 21 has the right to vote in national and municipal election. Likewise, the law grants women and men the right to be elected to a public office and serve as parliamentary members

(نائب - Nayeb), governors (محافظ - Muhafeth) or mayors (مختار - Mukhtar). Furthermore, no linguistic terms exist in the Lebanese Constitution that exclude women from assuming public positions.

Although citizenship is a political right, it is treated on different grounds. Foreign women married to Lebanese men are eligible to obtain Lebanese citizenship after one year of being lawfully married (although I received my Lebanese citizenship after ten years of marriage due to corruption). Conflicting resolutions have been passed over the years regarding the foreign husband's eligibility to obtain Lebanese citizenship for marrying a Lebanese woman.

Currently Lebanese women cannot transmit their citizenship rights to their spouses or children. I was given several explanations to justify the rationale behind this type of restriction. These included religious and patriarchal definitions of the head of a household and the political fear of nationalizing Palestinian men. Ironically, if the father is not Lebanese, the child is denied Lebanese citizenship, but if the father is unknown—or, in Lebanese terms, if the child is a bastard or a "child of sin" (*Ibn-haram*— ابن حرام), s/he is automatically granted the citizenship of the mother. In contrast to Tunisia, where both men and women can pass their citizenship status onto their children (Charrad 2000; 2007b), Lebanese citizenship is granted on the bases of *Jus Sanguine* to children of a Lebanese father; and on the base of *Jus Soli*, to children under the age of 18 who were born on Lebanese soil with no determined filiations to a father. In either case, women do not have the right to pass their citizenship status onto their husbands and certainly not to

their children (Moghaizel 1985). Charrad contemplates how such practices obstruct women's obtaining full citizenship rights. She says: "Becoming a citizen as understood in today's world involves the acquisition of individual rights. Patrilineality and kin-based patriarchy reinforce each other to prevent women from becoming full citizens and from gaining individual rights" (2000: 86).

These legally constructed situations have incited scholars like Lamia Rustum Shehadeh (1998) to argue that Lebanese women enjoy greater citizenship rights if they remain unmarried. There are laws that restrict women's rights by requiring them to obtain their husband's permission to open a bank account for their children, for instance. However, the laws do not specify permission from the father, the brother or the uncle, a single woman's legal guardians, which means that the same laws are not binding on single women even though they are typically younger and less mature than married women.

Given this legal morass, I suspect that single Lebanese women have little motivation to confront citizenships law in their own lives, unless they are the offspring of non-Lebanese fathers and Lebanese mothers. Married women can make it through the system and avoid conflict with citizenship laws if they learn how to comply with the social expectations that dictate their marriage choices (that is, marrying only Lebanese men of their own sect, as all marital issues get resolved in the man's religious courts); and if they chose to never divorce their husbands. If by chance they are widowed with children, the law gives custody to the paternal kin. The number of women who do not conform to these norms is increasing, but they remain a minority. Legal sanctioning of endogamy

and homogony reinforce social customs and norms as most women still get married to members of their own sect, nationality and religion.

The Lebanese Council of Women has initiated a campaign on citizenship rights, holding press conferences, negotiating with decision-makers, preparing presentation for international conferences, and representing the two competing women's rights coalitions. These two post-Beijing coalitions have adopted different approaches to campaigning for citizenship. The first coalition is headed by the *National Coalition to Eliminate Discrimination against Women* who have militated almost exclusively for the right of women to pass their citizenship rights onto their children under the slogan, "Citizenship is my children and my right." The coalition has scored some victories in pressuring some legislators to support the proposed reform. As Linda Mattar explains:

> "We first started on the ground… we proposed a legislative amendment and presented it to the deputies and in a press conference. We explained our approach to understanding citizenship. The way to maneuver the legal process is to present justifications for amendments. We contested the citizenship laws of 1925… we argued in our proposal the reasons that necessitate the amendment according to the Lebanese Constitution and international treaties on human rights and others. We put forth a call for all Lebanese women who were married to a non-Lebanese to come and register with us… We now have tens of thousands of names."

The second coalition emerged within the Lebanese Women's Network, *CRTD-A*. This coalition has crystallized around an awareness campaign, and has reached out to allies in

other Arab countries. Here the focus is on reforming the law to let women pass the right of citizenship onto their husbands as well as children, under the slogan, "Citizenship is my *family* and my right."[40] This campaign appeals mostly to progressive groups, especially young couples and college students. From an interview I conducted with Lina Abu Habib, the director of CRTD-*A*, I received this explanation:

> We're doing a lot of community awareness raising on citizenship, etc. And the main observation from what we have been doing over the past year, is that definitely there is reaction, definitely what we're trying to communicate is ringing a bell. Yes there's a lot of negative reaction but at the same time we're finding a lot of support in all sorts of different places.

Figure 3: CRTD-A Citizenship Campaign

The demand for citizenship involves the way kin groups socially reproduce themselves. Charrad observes that "Issues of women's rights in that region [The Middle East and North Africa] unavoidably involve questions about the fundamental place of kinship ties in the social fabric and the role of kin-based social formations in politics" (2000: 87). Currently, non-Lebanese do not have equal rights to inheritance, property ownership, or

[40] Note to the second coalition's framing of the campaign deemphasizes the controversy of nationalizing foreign husbands as this bumper sticker shows only a woman and a child.

other rights that fall in the kinship domain. So far, these campaigns have concentrated on petitioning the government in the hopes that changing the law will force kin groups to extend these legal rights to their female members.

2. LEGAL JUSTICE

Reforming laws that impact women's lives is a complicated and fractious issue over which women's rights activists struggle. In additional to legal aspects associated with citizenship rights, this area covers three different dimensions: social services, domestic violence, and personal status codes. As I have pointed out, an example of non-contentious and popular woman's rights project is extending social security rights to women, which depends on organizational perseverance in overcoming government's bureaucracy, inefficiency and corruption. The accomplishments of women's organizations have been modest yet noteworthy. They have been most effective in changing laws that do not interfere with or offend kinship and confessional structure such as earning the right to vote in 1952, the right to purchase contraceptive in 1983, entitlements to retirement benefits in 1987, entitlement to social security benefits in 1999. Aided by the international community, women's rights organizations have pressed the Lebanese government to ratify and sign the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discriminations against Women (CEDAW) and committed to the provisions of the 1995 UN Conference on Women in Beijing. A partial list of their accomplishments is listed in the table below:

Table 7: Advancements in Rights Claimed by Activists	
Suffrage Right	1952
First women candidate for Parliament	1953
First women elected to Parliament (Emily Bustani replacing father)	1963
Equal Inheritance for Christian women	1959
Rights to Lebanese citizenship if marrying a non-Lebanese man	1960
Rights to travel without husband's permission	1974
Rights to purchase contraceptives	1983
Entitlement to Retirement benefits	1987
Right to witness in Real Estate	1993
Right for married women to open business	1994
Rights for diplomatic women marrying non-Lebanese to citizenship	1994
Married women's right to life insurance	1995
CEDAW	1996
Penalizing Honor crimes (reduced punishment)	1999
Working women's entitlement for social security	1999
Eliminating discrimination in the workplace (types of job, night shifts, etc.)	2000
Extending maternity leave from 6 weeks to 7 weeks fully paid	2000
Working women's entitlement to pubic Health care benefits and their families	2002/2003

Because, as I pointed out before, economic claims to social security are not seen as adverse to either kinship or confessional structures, they enjoy widespread support. Additionally, organizations, syndicates and unions in several domains support these efforts to eliminate discrimination against women in labor laws, social welfare and

entitlement programs. These organizations work closely with the Ministry of Social Affairs through its Women's Section. Ma□tre Iqbal Dughan, who leads the League of Working Women, explains the benefits of extending social security rights for women:

> We worked for over 25 years to secure social security for children through their mothers. We were calling for the right of women to be considered breadwinners. We encouraged men to join in our plight given that the amendment of this law would benefit men. And in fact, husbands started backing us because they realized that they are ameliorating the situation of the family given that they and their children were the primary beneficiaries. Mind you, not all issues can be won this way but we have to try. I believe that it is very important to raise men's and boys' awareness of and belief in women's rights (Raida 2005: 74).

Three organizations are devoted to combating violence against women (Lebanese Council to Resist Violence against Women, the Lebanese Women Democratic Gathering, and Kafa). They have hotlines, counseling and legal services. Other organizations have also worked fervently on this issue. For instance, the *Lebanese Women Network*—a coalition of thirteen organizations—launched a campaign to end honor crimes. These efforts have been focused on raising public awareness in the media arena, and bringing private matters, such as domestic violence, into the spotlight of public and political arenas (Baydun 2002). Although intrusion into the domain of the family remains a taboo in Lebanon and other Middle Eastern countries, a confluence of influences – most notably, the penetration of the norms of modernization and the consciousness raising work by past generations of women activists, make it impossible for any Lebanese to publicly declare his/her support of domestic violence.

Scholars have emphasized the significance of Family Law and its implications for the social system. Charrad labeled Family Law as a "Precision Instrument" of control and "as a boundary-setting device. It does not determine what people do, but it restricts their choices" (2001: 5). Similar to the Constitutional order which Ritter (2006: 9) identifies in her book, *Constitution as Social Design*, the Personal Status Law "acts as an instrument of social design when social roles are made pertinent to civic membership, and when the terms of civic membership are used to regulate social relations."

The Personal Status or Family law, (قانون الأحوال الشخصية – *qanun al ahwal al shakhsiyeh*) regulates marriage, divorce, filiations, adoption and guardianship. In Lebanon, its jurisprudence has been transformed from *Dhimma* to *Millet* to Confessional systems corresponding with three historical rulings of Islamic conquests, Ottoman Empire and the French Mandate respectively.[41] Each of the sixteen denominations devised its own personal status code and established its own Confessional Court that exercises its exclusive jurisdiction over the following matters:

1. Engagement and dowry
2. Marriage (lawfulness, rights and obligations, annulment, separation, dissolution)
3. Requirements for Legal and Illegal Filiations and Adoption
4. Parental Authority over and Guardianship of children and other minors
5. Managing divorce, separation, annulment as well as associated alimony.

[41] For more information on the various personal status laws and their history, see Appendix I.

6. Imposing and estimating child support

This is the third and most important aspect of the legal battles, one that targets the reform of the sixteen family codes. Coalitions and organizations are struggling to introduce civil marriage as well as to reform the unfair custody and guardianship laws. Rasha, an activist in Helem, the only LGBT advocacy organization in the Arab world, shows the relevance of legal justice to every aspect of life in Lebanon:

> I think the personal status law affects every fabric of the entire society. Because of what it's based on, not just the inequalities of the laws themselves but they create inequalities not just between men and women but between women and women. And, it is based on the sectarian division of the society and that sectarianism is also based on a specific kinship model and all of this put together, there is a hegemony of the family at the end. You have the family as the core base that goes into the community and into the sects, which is what the society base. So you have complete denial of the individual because of this setup. And when you have a complete denial of the individual, it's very difficult to fight for something as individual as gay rights.

But why is even questioning the justice of personal status codes considered a taboo? This law lies strictly within the hands of confessional apparatus that has solidified its strong alliance with kin groups throughout history. Therefore, family law, in my opinion, is the most challenging law to reform and I doubt that we will see it change in our lifetime. To Professor Fadia Hoteit, this law is the root of all other obstacles that face women in Lebanon today:

> The Personal Status Code is the biggest obstacle for women's rights in Lebanon. It is the knot which, once resolved will strip the confessions of their power. Confessions now are the ones who prevent women from reaching full citizenship. If I want to run for a political seat, I must run as a Shiite using my husband's last name, not my name, and I must run to represent his village, not mine. No matter how much his village men love me, I am still a stranger. And his village would not elect a strange woman over their own men. So in my opinion, the confessional rules discriminate against women. Religion even interfere in our relationships with our husbands in our beds, we must break this system.

In Lebanon, and elsewhere in the Middle East and the Islamic world, the road to complete equality is long and thorny. Scholars like Charrad have long argued that "Whether women's groups can gather enough leverage in national politics by themselves is doubtful, but feminists have been effective in gaining limited battles by making strategic alliance with other groups that see support for their cause as a means to their own ends" (2007a: 69-70). Lebanon serves as a prototype of Middle Eastern societies and of countries in conflict like Iraq. It is also a living laboratory to examine the impact of religion, kinship and politics on expanding or restricting women's rights. My overview highlighted the political cleavages and opportunities in Lebanon presented by shifting alliances after the fifteen year civil war and the mounting international pressure for gender equality in terms of issues related to political and legal rights. Activists transformed these issues from claims that confront the base of the society to claims that can be advanced on the political surface. Hence, I will examine how activists

institutionalize their social movement's organizations and mobilized available resources.

C. Organizational Strategies

In analyzing their organizational strategies, I reference both the internal and external structuration processes by selecting from categories suggested by Kriesi (1996: 154).[42] I consider the embedded-autonomous paradigm of women's rights organizations on three criteria: mechanisms for choosing leaders, mechanisms for administering the organization and recruitment. I consider the external structuration in terms of alliances they form and funding sources they pursue. I present leaders who assume their position by rational-legal means—having been elected democratically based on merit—as well as traditional and charismatic leaders. Second, I review the characteristics of organizations that tend towards autonomous administration strategies (using independent space and hired administration) as well those that rely on help from overlapping embedded sources. In analyzing external structuration, "the integration of an SMO in its organizational environment," I consider the "three dimensions to be taken into consideration in this regard: the SMO's relation with its constituency, its allies, and the authorities" (Kriesi 1996: 154-5). Here I examine the coalitions that women's organizations formed or joined

[42] "*Internal structuration* of SMOs refers to processes of formalization, professionalization, internal differentiation and integration. Formalization means the development of formal membership criteria, the introduction of forma statutes and established procedures, the creation of a formal leadership and office structure. Professionalization means the management by paid staff members who make careers out of movement work. Internal differentiation concerns the functional division of labor (task-structure) and the territorial decentralization (territorial subunits). The integration of the differentiated functional and territorial subunits is achieved by horizontal coordinating mechanisms, and by centralization of decisions" (Kriesi 1996: 154). I do not discuss integration although some of the organizations I studied had horizontal coordinating mechanism as well as centralization of decision-making. However, my data did not find any diversion from Kriesi's argument.

in the quest for maximizing their bargaining power and I compare embedded organizations' fundraising approaches with autonomous soliciting funds strategies.

Women's organizations have indirectly made a breakthrough in the strong triangular alliances between the state, religion and the family. Acting as political agents of social change, they followed a nonconfrontational, although not passive, strategy to mobilize immanently within the traditional social structures (Baydun 2002; Bazri and Baydun 1998). In the Middle East and similar social contexts, scholars have shown that women have claimed their personal autonomy while operating within "the rules of their bargain" (Hutson 2001: 734). They employ "flexible" strategies to feature their issues in public forums, build collective resistance and advance their rights (Abdulhadi 1998; Hasso 1998).

1. LEADERSHIP

Leadership for women's rights in Lebanon divides into activist practitioners, academics and female politicians. Many women self-identify as activist practitioners. In as much as their credibility and position depends on their work within the organization, they operate within an autonomous space. Among the organizations I studied, the autonomous achievement model is found in the Lebanese Women League, the Lebanese Women Democratic Gathering, the Lebanese Women Council, and the Lebanese Council to Resist Violence against Women. Several organizations encourage autonomous activity but remain under the governance of their founding leaders including the League of Working Women and the Movement for People's Rights.

I classify the second type of leadership, activist scholars, as relatively autonomous, in as much as they have emerged in a social space that valorizes individual achievement. Activist scholars advance women studies in their universities and use their university classroom as public arenas to raise social consciousness. Professor Azza Charara Beydoun, for instance, challenges "the beliefs of her Hezbollah female students regarding the Islamist project in our country and its negative impact on women. I feel that I leave them puzzled with many questions that require them to think critically in order to answer."

Scholars also participate in projects run by state agencies and in think-tanks; they prepare UN reports, like CEDAW; they monitor women's participation in elections; and they interact with global NGOs. Within the Lebanese public sphere, they participate in a number of decentralized and autonomy-seeking organizations, and thus avoid the patriarchal connectivity that is so common in Lebanese public life. Four examples stand out. The first is the Bahithat, the most horizontal group of activists I met in Lebanon. Every two years they elect a coordinator whose responsibilities are strictly administrative and constantly contested. Hoteit admits that this decentralization of the group's management was designed mostly to break the masculine cycle of power. Hoteit recognizes that depriving the coordinator of decision-making power is frustrating and has led several to resign from the position including her, yet "I admire the Bahithat because it is evolving yet it remains committed to its guiding principles." The Bahithat organize conferences and publish journals that incorporate the scholarship of other Arab and

international scholars (Baydun 2002). Despite their high propensity to be measured as autonomy-seeking, the Bahithat have carved out their niche due to funding practices which are rooted in embedded resources. Especially in their early stages, these researchers' husbands helped them tremendously in securing funds as Beydoun states:

> Let me tell if you want, you have a point because the Bahithat's connections started with Salim Nasr who was the director of the Ford Foundation in Lebanon. Salim Nasr is related to Laure Moghaizel because her maiden name is Nasr. So, his wife was Marleine and he had money in Ford to pay nongovernmental organizations. So he knows us and he is related to one of our founding members… we also had other connections. Jean Said Makdisi, who is the sister of Edward Said, and the wife of Salim Makdisi, an economist, former economic minister and former President of the American University of Beirut (AUB) and she taught at the Lebanese American University (LAU). So she had connection to Audi Bank who also funded us. And my husband was the president of the UNESCO Lebanese committee and they too gave us little money.

The three other organizations are the Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World, CRTD-A and the National Committee for the Follow Up of Women's Issues. These organizations are scholarly/activist hybrids. Decision making power is concentrated rather than diffused. The Institute was founded in 1973, and has been led by three directors, its founder Joulina Abu Nasr, who was a professor of early childhood education, Mrs. Mona Khalaf, an economist and the current professor of communication, Professor Dima-Dabbous Sensenig, the first two served until they retired and the current

director has been serving since 2005.

The National Committee was founded after the wave of UN's Beijing conference and their discourse focuses on fulfilling the goals of Beijing and CEDAW. Its leadership, embodied by Professor Aman Shaarani and to some degree Professor Fehmieh Charafeddine, has never been contested from within. Shaarani's credentials include her kin group's reputation, her husband's position as the colonel of the police who worked closely with the president of Lebanon, her previous post as the head of the Lebanese Women Council, and her attempt to run for a seat in the Parliament. Her academic career includes teaching at the Lebanese University and having a long scholarly history in writing and researching women's status in Lebanon. Charafeddine shares a similar scholarly background as her expertise has been solicited by international and UN organizations to produce local and regional gender studies.

The Collective, CRTD-A, which was also founded after Beijing, serves as a clearinghouse of information on women's status and activism both in Lebanon and other Arab countries. Run by Lina Abou Habib and her husband Omar, it has made Abou Habib perhaps the face of the Lebanese movement internationally. In Lebanon, she is known for her great skills in attracting international funds and her interest in the citizenship campaign.

As is evident from this sample, leadership patterns vary from being diffused in principle to being highly concentrated. As I have shown in the Kinship Chapter, the Lebanese

intellectual sector is the product, in many ways, of kinship trajectories, with many of its leading members having benefited from their bourgeois intellectual family tradition and connections. This, of course, impacts the organization of the women's rights movement. These organizations and their intellectuals follow a familiar modernization paradigm, in which the aim is to transform the "mentality" of the people to catch up with the global trends in promoting human development and democracy.

The female politicians are of a small group of charismatic and traditional leaders who are relatively embedded. Whether involved in politics or charity, these leaders gained power through their family names and connections, and are expected to pass on their leadership to their children. Taking advantage of their social positions, these leaders are able to gain access to decision-makers, with many of whom they are related, and are the natural recipients of funding from local and international entities. While activists and scholars welcome the alliance of these women, they do not like to consider them core to the movement as evident in the following conversation with Princess Hayat Arslan:

> Arslan: whenever there is a strong woman or a powerful woman or a woman who can make a certain change, women begin to shoot on her. They don't want [her to succeed], thinking: Why not me? That happened to me during the quota campaign because I was working so intensively and I could do something. Everybody was against me especially those women who worked earlier. So I had to face them telling them, thanks to every woman who had a history in this struggle, thanks to every woman who is taking the struggle now, and thanks to any woman who will take it in the future. Why should we stop each other that's why they shut their

mouths. Otherwise, they don't want. They were against me.

Stephan: So it is more competitive. Do you feel because they feel so disempowered?

Arslan: Maybe maybe because they worked and worked and worked and nobody heard them. Okay. Maybe the timing was wrong and maybe you didn't address it from the right angle, I don't know.

Stephan: Do you think they feel threatened by you being Arslan?

Arslan: Yes, they don't like me being an Arslan and fighting for this, they feel that I am more powerful, and sorry to say it, more acceptable than them.

Stephan: Because of…

Arslan: Because of my way of addressing things. Even the Arslans they don't like me for that. Because when I address any issue, I succeed because I know how to. The Arslans don't like this and the women don't like this and our opponents don't like this because even our opponents say we do respect her but they don't like me to appear in any media, in anywhere. They feel so upset when I am there. And that's why I am still limited.

Many insist that the rich and famous, the embedded, who speak in the name of women's rights are intruders rather than true believers in women's rights they question their legitimacy to activism and claim that these women have relied heavily on their male kin members to set up charitable organizations for them in order to gain popular recognition, attract foreign funds, and keep them entertained. Alamedinne believes that "The political elites all have NGOs for their wives to kill time. Actually those NGOs serve double purposes. The first is to offer the public services and get their support during elections

and the second purpose is to attract international funds and apply projects that please the foreigners." Some even accuse PMs Nayla Moawad and Bahia Hariri of fitting this category as evident in Rasha's horrified reaction to my question about them:

> What I know about Nayla Moawad is that she knows nothing about gender and she knows nothing about women's rights. And funders come saying we have a handful of money for working on women's issues, so she says okay I will work on women's issues. Give me the money. So they give her the money.

Yet the role of embedded women leaders has been essential to advancing women's rights, even if it is done through family-run charitable organizations.

2. USE OF SPACE

A characteristic of those groups that tend towards autonomous strategies is the use of independent office space. Among the groups that have one are the Women's Democratic Gathering, Lebanese Association of Women Researchers (Bahithat), League of Lebanese Women's Rights, Helem, CRTD-A, Lebanese Council to Resist Violence Against Women, the Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World, and the Lebanese Women Council. Some organizations share the space with other professional or activist entities. For instance, the Dughan law office functions as the headquarters of the League of Working Women.

Among the women of the political category, however, the home of the founder/director is where the operation of the organization is run. It is an almost perfect symbol of the overlap between family and public space in Lebanon. A clear example of this category is

the Women's Political Empowerment Committee. The home functions as the site for political gatherings, fundraising events, recruiting and planning. However, even when a designated office space exists, the home is often preferred by activists. These spaces materially embody the ambiguous relation of a certain cadre of activists to kinship networks, since it is within this private space that women have entered or formed political circles. Moawad explains that only after marrying her, was René, her husband able to invite people over and "open his house:"

> Moawad: We were the only Shihabi[43] house that always received people. We always had political gatherings and René's friend got used to my presence in these meeting. René did not like that there were times when he wasn't yet home, and they arrived, so so I got to spend time with this group.
>
> Stephan: Didn't the women in the house already do that?
>
> Moawad: Yes but in René's house there were no women. When I got married, the house became open and I would invite people for lunch and dinner and visit people as well.

This same group, whom she received in her home, came to her house three days after her husband's assassination asking her to continue his journey: "I had been René's partner in his political work. But never in the life of Zogharta had a woman been in power. Three days after his death about six thousand people came to me requesting that I continue."

[43] The Maronite Shihabi Amirs converted from Islam and ruled Lebanon semi-autonomously from the Ottomans from 1697 to 1842, the era of Lebanon's golden age.

The Moghaizels also used their home to organize and exchange intellectual and political ideas. According to Fadi Moghaizel, "it was mainly people who were lawyers, people from the Democratic Party, it was people with whom they lived which were always people involved for some cause." Activists have also opened their house to encourage social networking and fundraising. Said proudly explains how she used her home:

> I use my family status to strengthen these ladies' relationship and to recruit new families... In October, I will host a tea party for the general committee in my house; I would open all the balconies because I would need all the space to fit all these people. At the National Committee dinner, there was a group of women whom I have recruited from my involvement with other Beiruti organizations. So I invite to my house the groups that I recruited to the Association to have close social ties with them and build trust-worthy working relations. We have to give some incentives to our volunteers, and these social ties are parts of these incentives.

Although the independent office space was clearly a sign of autonomous formalization of the organization's internal structure, the house remains very important in personalizing relationships and embedding them in symbolic kinship norms. To open one's house is a sign of proximity in social ties and an incentive to strengthen them.

3. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND RECRUITING

According to the flexible Ottoman administrative code, any three or four individuals can set up an *ahlia* organization by just sending a public notification (*Elem w Khabar* – علم وخبر) to the Ministry of Interior. This law was temporarily suspended when the country

was under Syrian occupation, but people still managed to form their nongovernmental association using other legal venues. Most of the organizations I studied had clearly defined organizational structures that comprised an executive committee and a general committee along with a body of constituents and frequently elected officers. Most of the organizations had boards of advisors and directors as well as an executive committee. The autonomy/embedded paradigm is applied here by examining the determinants that condition the overall trajectory – via personal histories and the generation of institutional rules - of the individuals who fill organizational positions.

Both the League and the Gathering staff according to the track records of the personnel in activism. In the League are people like Aida Nassrallah and Azza Mroueh and in the Gathering, Caroline Slaibi and Joumana Mer'i, who have proven their organizational qualifications. Several organizations I studied have several different leaders responsible for different domains of organizational interest. Among these organizations I count the Lebanese Women Network, Lebanese Association of Women Researchers, the National Committee for the Follow Up of Women's Issues and the Lebanese Council to Resist Violence Against Women. Leaders are all volunteers, although some do receive minimal compensation from the organization. These organizations also recruit volunteers through the activities and services they provide.

Other organizations depend mostly on hires. The more affluent groups often rely on international funding, which has its detractors and supporters. The notion of "parachuted-

in" feminism is controversial. Dr. Ugarit Younan, however, views the NGOs as a positive step to empower the working class and encourage their activism:

> International funding created a new working stratum called "NGO workers." These individuals have gained popularity without being a member of the Velvet Society or the Bourgeoisie. So this working class person, who has the talents and the drive, now lives of these organizations. Thus, in the last 20 to 30 years, a new profession is emerging and that is the professional social workers.

The third type of organizational structures is the small shops, or, as Suad Joseph calls them dakakeen. The concept of the *dakakeen* is based on "patron-client models of organization in which the leader is at once head of the organization, benefactor, often sole or main decision-maker, and frequently the founder of the organization" (Joseph 1997b: 57-8). For example, the Women's Political Committee is identified with its founder, Princess Hayat Arslan and her extended kinship and social networks, as she describes the establishment of the Committee:

> In 2004 we established the Committee, we are 10, most of them are doctors or Ph.D., I don't know how it began. Oh yeah, it began when I met a professor, a Ph.D. holder a lady who is interested in those things and it seems she heard of me talking about it I don't know what and she told me that she's interested. And she introduced to professors at the Lebanese University, now I have two of them, and an ex-Professor also, a man, and then a doctor whom I know, he is a friend, also he wanted to help. And he is in Committee. We have a lawyer as well, we have 3

men with us, and the 7 others are women. As I told you we have 2 professors, we have 2 ladies who are activists, and me and 2 others.

Arslan's use of the possessive (I have, we have) recalls the retainers of the older, feudal order of the Ottoman past. Arslan's charitable organization, Lebanon the Giver and even her own family members are relied upon heavily to staff the organization and make it work.

Stephan: How do you recruit these people who assist?

Arslan: They are already recruited through the Society of Lebanon the Giver. We don't have our people in the Committee for Women Political Empowerment.

Stephan: Staff and …

Arslan: Yes yes. People are ready to help but you know when you have new people, you need to spend a lot of time telling them about why and what, the targets, aims. I don't know. You have to spend time what you want and why and to convince them of your ideas, it might take some time.

In summary, autonomy-encouraging organizations and embedded organizations differ materially in the way in which they staff, create rules and procedures, and recruit.

4. COALITIONS

Building coalitions is an external structuration strategy that contributes to the advancement of the organization. Women's rights activists are well aware of the power of collective bargaining as a channel to pressure political elites and gain access to political and social powerholders through means other than patriarchal networks. They have done

so by bridging ideological, political and religious difference and building coalitions centered on women's rights.

Since the early forties, women's organizations have been building alliances with other Lebanese, Arab and international women's rights groups. During this early independence period, the two major women advocacy groups were the Lebanese Women Union, which was founded in 1920 to bring together Arab nationalists and leftists, and the Christian Women Solidarity Association (CWSA). In 1950, leaders from both camps formed a joint executive committee for the Union and the Association. In 1952, members of the joint committee decided to form a permanent organization known as the Lebanese Council of Women. The Council remains today as one of the most representative umbrella amalgamation of women's organizations that enjoys a consultative status in the Lebanese Parliament.

Lebanese women's rights organizations have formed two major coalitions that are under the Lebanese Council of Women. The two coalitions work simultaneously on the same issues, but use different approaches. On the one hand, the National Coalition To Eliminate all Discriminations against Women was founded in 1999 of "associations, unions, institutions and gatherings from various Lebanese regions" with the aim to implement CEDAW, strengthening the basis of real equality in the Lebanon society and eliminating all kinds of discrimination against women. They aspire "to amend Lebanese

penal, trade, labor, tax, social security and public sector codes[44]; to eliminate the contradiction between the law and the practice; to spread the culture women's right and human's right in general" (Brochure). On the other hand, founders of the Lebanese Women Network declare that the Network "is neither a random organization nor an alternative replacement of anyone. It is a different approach towards achieving women's advancement based on a well-determined vision, 'complete equality', and supported by the principle that a woman is an independent human being who has the capacity and capability of participating in both public and private life" (Brochure).

Lebanese women's rights organizations are also allies with regional and global movements. In addition to being members of the Arab Women Union, Nassrallah says that the League is connected internationally: "We were among the first organizations that joined the International Democratic Women Union which allowed us to meet women's groups from all over the world. Through it, we established relationship with these groups and presented an alternative model to what the Western media portrays of our region."

Most of these autonomy-seeking organizations have tried to minimize the kinship effect by including members from all socioeconomic and religious background, choosing the option of forming coalitions capable of mobilizing exogenous support (i.e. using NGO money) and negotiating with decision-makers. Yet, despite their monumental efforts, these coalitions tend to experience frictions, limited access to funding, inadequate

[44] Note that the brochure does not mention personal status laws.

organizational management and restricted entry points to lessen their influence on political processes.

5. FUNDING

Given the overwhelming importance of kinship position in the Lebanese economy, the funding of women's rights organizations is a controversial subject. Here, even autonomous feminists confront the reality of a kinship-centric society. The option of relying on foreign aid can, itself, lead to clientalist relationships.

In terms of financial support, organizations can be divided into three categories: First, autonomous organizations who seek and obtain funding from foundations in Western Europe and Canada. The most significant funders of Lebanese women-related projects are the Canadian International Development Research Center (IDRC) and Oxfam (Canada and Britain). CRTD-A's funds for 2007 for instance were provided by the following foundations: The Global Fund for Women; Kvinna till Kvinna; Heinrich Boell Foundation; European Union; Microsoft; Canada Fund for Local Initiatives; Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) (via Oxfam Quebec); Oxfam GB and International Development Research Center – IDRC and the Japanese Embassy.

The second group receives funding from Saudi Arabia or Iran, although I did not interview anyone who receives any direct funding from the Iranian government except for Rima Fakhry from Hezbollah. Mattar proudly expresses that the League does not yield to Western money and its ready-to-implement agendas. According to Mattar, "We

are willing to give them receipts and that is their right. But beyond that, we are not willing to accept. We do not put their logo on our projects nor do we take money from people who are our enemy. People have offered us, and we need the money, but we did not take it." The League was able to renovate its office and purchase new computers thanks to a donation from the Saudi Prince Walid bin Talal Foundation channeled through his Lebanese aunt, former Minister, Layla Solh.

The third group relies on embedded tactics and sources of funding. These tactics are most suited to groups that are associated with traditional leaders, who use their charisma in fundraising efforts. Those who fundraise include Nayla Moawad, Hayat Arslan and Rabab as-Sadr, all of whom use their positions in kinship or sectarian networks to benefit their organizations. These women travel the world to obtain donations mostly from Lebanese living abroad. Rabab Sadr mostly taps into the Shiite network around the world:

> Stephan: You mentioned Africa and America and Canada. How much communication is there between the Lebanese emigrant and your organization?
>
> Sadr: We are always in communication and without their help, I would not be able to continue my work.
>
> Stephan: How did you reach out to them?
>
> Sadr: I followed up on the connections they had with Imam Musa Sadr. These are Lebanese communities in diaspora which the Imam used to visit always. They received him when he visited him and they keep coming to visit me to remember him. So I continued the road he started. Of course the first time it was difficult,

> everything is difficult in the beginning but a bit by bit it got easier. I go with my advisors and a working group. We stay away for a month at times.

As we saw in the Personal Strategies Chapter, Princess Arslan feels that her title as a princess puts her on a more equal bases with other Arab Emirs and Sheikhs, especially when she is fundraising. She feels that she is just like them, a royalty. So they "cannot treat me as if I am coming to beg something. You are a princess I am a princess." Yet, while Arslan visits Druze diaspora communities to fundraise for her charitable organization, she speaks about women's rights and finds sympathizing audience that is ready to write a blank check:

> In my latest visit to New York, where we had our dinner, annual dinner for the Society, I was the speaker talking about women empowerment, and they were really interested, the people who attended the dinner and they said 'we didn't know that there is such a movement in the country.' And if say it is a movement, we are giving it a bigger size, it is not a movement; it is just individuals from here and there. So they said they will be ready to do anything to help but, I am busy, I do admit that I didn't give it enough time because I am doing so many things all together, and I don't till now, it didn't develop in mind how to, the coordination on which bases, what am I going to ask them so they can be supportive there and effective here.

Activists obtain funding from the United States through embedded channels only. They proudly accept donations from the Lebanese-American diaspora as evident in Mattar's

anecdotes of the generosity of the Lebanese-American community in Detroit, Michigan. Lebanese-American women and their organizations sent the League monetary assistance, especially during the war; they also invited Mattar to speak in Detroit, instead of applying directly to philanthropic organizations. Interestingly, obtaining funding "autonomously" from the United State is strategically planned insofar as activists assert their authenticity in the Arab culture and Lebanese Society. Several organizations turned down American offers for funding willingly, on the premises of their opposition of Americans' violations of human rights.[45]

Funding is essential for the maintenance and social reproduction of the women's rights movement; it is an expression of an internal ideological set yet it contributes to the external structuration of women's organizations. Next, I will examine what strategies women apply to mobilize their constituency and encourage their participation in, and support for, the women's movement in Lebanon.

[45] Rasha who represents the only LGBT organization in the Middle East explained why they do not accept American money:

> Stephan: why not from the American government?
> Rasha: First, ethically because it is a war hungry government. It's not something we want to be involved with.
> Stephan: So based on its involvement in Iraq?
> Rasha: Iraq and Palestine and Afghanistan and Sudan and… it's just not. We are first and foremost a human rights organization. So, we are not about to put one set of human rights in competition with another. You know, we do take these things into consideration and on the other hand, it is not very good for us to be seen to be collaborating with the Americans as is, at all. The first thing we are fighting against is the perception that we are heresy from the West, not specifically America, but it can be specifically America. So, one of the tracks we are working on very very consciously, is trying to forge a local kind of, local community, with local terminology that we exist here and that we are Arabs and the like.

D. Framing

Building on Goffman (1974) and Snow et al (1986), I explore frame *transformation* strategies that women's rights activists in Lebanon apply to "changing old understandings and meanings and/or generating new ones" (Benford and Snow 2000: 625). This transformation, to which Goffman refers as a "keying," is "a systematic alteration" (Goffman 1974: 45).[46] Keying has a strong discursive dimension. It is also a tool by which the women's rights movement can infuse changes into the cultural sphere and indirectly producing modifications of social norms.

Activists have used many autonomous approaches to raise awareness of women's rights. Some approaches are pedagogically modeled to include hosting public lectures, talk shows, and distributing leaflets. Others are media approaches, such as television ads or even choreographing a Lebanese version of the Vagina Monologue (sponsored by the Lebanese Council to Resist Violence Against Women which I attended), for instance. Finally, there are the traditional forms of political protest, public vigils (one of which I also attended), etc. But through all these sites of activism, the more general framing theme was to transform the definitions of femininity and masculinity in such a way as to make them more equal and less invidious.

The brochure below was handed to me on a Sunday afternoon in the Centerville of Beirut where families gather in this pedestrian area to socialize. In addition to inviting the

[46] Snow et al (1986) have identified two such transformation processes that are pertinent to movement recruitment and participation: transformations of domain-specific and global interpretive frames.

children to color a large banner, Kafa's staff was accompanied by a European victim of domestic violence in a wheelchair.[47] Kafa's public campaigns presented domestic violence—a taboo subject that belongs strictly to the private sphere in dictating men's relationship with the females in the family in the Lebanese context—as a social problem that touches the consciousness of Lebanese on many levels. They embedded their frame alignment in conservative kinship values through extending to transform the significance of upholding family honor in protecting women and children. The brochure below articulates the embedded message of the campaign:

Figure 4: Kafa Poster against Domestic Violence

Enough Violence and Exploitation
Enough violence against women
Enough sexual harassment of children
Enough trafficking of women and children
Women and Children have the right to be protected from harm

[47] I do not believe that an Arab woman would publically humiliate her family by present herself as a victim of domestic violence.

The appeal to the Lebanese public is made by associating sexual trafficking with its universally unpopular connotations, violence against women, in order to transform kinship values of providing security to "weak" kin members into advocacy against domestic violence. Had the women presented their case as protecting women from violence inflicted on them by their male partners, many activists assured me, their campaign would have failed.

Instead of focusing only on lobbying politicians and signing petitions, women *embedded* their feminism in providing service and educating the public. Women's rights organizations often started from women's charity organizations, because in Lebanon, as in much of the Middle East, there is an absence of public goods investment or social insurance. Learning from this legacy, women's rights organizations have offered a variety of needed services that were otherwise unavailable. They provided educational, social and legal services to women; established numerous centers for legal and psychological counseling; and conducted public awareness campaigns on discrimination and violence against women to better assess the needs of women everywhere and deliver appropriate services.

They also had to transform and communicate a message that resonates with common grassroots Lebanese values: marriage, religion, family, motherhood and children. Using a gender vocabulary instead of feminism, they also extended activism for women's rights to mean equality for all people, including the poor and the foreign domestic servants. In raising women's awareness of their rights, Younan and others fight the sexual myth to

Lebanese women's "modernity" and "liberation" by bringing discussion of rights to the simplest level. Younan for instance talks to young women in her public forums about weddings. She asks brides who "search for the best bridal magazines to prepare for their weddings, visit the best shops in search for the perfect gown, and are very selective in choosing every aspect of their wedding: Why don't they also prepare for marriage by learning about their rights?" which they sign away in the marriage contract. Younan frames that the state, religious apparatus, and the family, who are supposed to be the ultimate sources of welfare, are actually incompetent in outlining women's rights to a woman who is about to undergo a ritual in which those rights are crucial:

> Public awareness is first the responsibility of those in power, including families (ahl), the church or the mosque, the school and the state; whoever is in power knows that. But confessions are not interested in raising public awareness because they know how unfair their laws are; and they prefer for their constituents not to learn about their rights. In fact, they frame these rights in ways that perpetuate the status quo and convince women not to forfeit the appreciation and praise they receive from their families.

Younan then, extends the frames of the established narrative to suggest that women ought to demand that the state, religion and family be held accountable by women.

Within the family structure, activists seek to make women aware of their self-value and contribution to their family. They transform women's appraisal of their domestic duties and housekeeping to convince constituents that the management training they acquire

while attending to the needs of their families can be applied to fulfill their own need for personal growth.

Women's rights activists recruit prospective constituents by teaching them to have self-confidence, to be independent and to appreciate themselves even if their surrounding society, family and husbands do not. Slaibi summarizes her approach to reaching out to women:

> We start with women who have lost their self-confidence and who feel that they do not do anything worthy in their lives. Society devalues women's work in the house, the family ignores the value of their contributions, so do their husbands. So the woman feels that nothing she does is worth rewarding. On the contrary, we tell them that they are doing a lot in fact by merely cooking and shopping. These tasks, we tell them, are important which men would have to pay for if they did not do them. We say: You are doing housekeeping and that is management just like managing a corporation. At that point, women feel the significance of their purpose in life as individuals. We give them a different feeling so they become grateful to us because no one ever has said to them anything similar to what we tell them. So they go back home and reconsider their choices in life. They decide to learn, participate, and gain independence in life.

As Slaibi deals with combating violence against women, we see how this type of empowerment not only encourages the women to resist violence against them but to also gain independence and personal autonomy and end up joining the movement.

This is how Nada Majed became involved in the Gathering. After going through vocational training program, Majed decided to participate in the movement and became the Gathering's coordinator for the adult literacy program. Although literacy is a type of social service that many organizations provide for various personal and altruistic reasons, the Gathering has transformed literacy programs to awareness sessions focused on rights. Majed explains that social change in their adult literary starts with the choice of the words they teach and how they present these words:

> For instance, we teach the word work. We say there are a male worker (Amel - عامل) and a female worker (Amela - عاملة). Do you know the impact of saying these words? …by discussing the word worker, we talk about workers' rights and how they exist in Lebanon and why some rights are not guaranteed by the government and who is responsible for that. Then we ask them, how come these literacy books from which you are learning ignore female workers? Is the feminine T (ta' al ta'neeth تاء التأنيث ة) too difficult to pronounce? Are there women workers in real life? Then why do you think these books do not mention women?

The next step that Majed highlights in combating illiteracy is empowering women to start their small business enterprise or seek employment. Many women recruit additional participants and advertize the services of the Gathering. Lebanese women's activists thus sought to change certain everyday life practices, and – as in the case of the dominance of the male worker in textbooks – sought to show how men and women could be framed as partners. Many programs targeted raising men's awareness of women's issues and gaining their support. They transformed patriarchal roles of the father and the husband as

typical “providers” to mobilize men in empowering women and advancing their vocational training. Anita Nassar’s example shows the impact of getting men’s permission and including them in the empowerment programs:

> Nassar: For example, when doing the income generating while doing these skills, I had to go and talk to men so they would able, father to be able to send their daughters and for husbands to let their wives for the center to be trained.
>
> Stephan: How did you convince them?
>
> Nassar: I convinced them by showing them if their daughter stays at home, and if she is illiterate and has no skills and if he’s gone, there is no one to take care of her. And if she is not generating money, he has to worry about how to feed her but if she has, she’s generating, she’ll be self-sufficient and then he can be happy. Because they are zero, they have no income whatsoever, he has nothing to lose. But there was change for their daughters to have confidence, especially those who were displaced from very rural areas, in the South, even in the North. They were scared of what are we talking about. Men would say ‘what are you talking in those things’ especially the religious ones... I used to invite them to come and see what they’re doing, come and see who is training them. Look, she’s going to have a diploma, she will be able to read, she will even know how to get her way in going around if she doesn’t really need. If she doesn’t know how to spend money, how to count, what are you doing? You’re going to throw her like this? So bit by bit, sometimes it was difficult to convince, most of the times I was very successful.

Transformative framing was applied to the family context. Activists have insisted that woman's empowerment must be seen in the context of her role in the family, dissolving the divide between women's rights in the sphere of legal equality and women's rights within the family. The struggle for women's equality is operationalized both in a relatively autonomous context as well as in a context of embeddedness in kinship ties. It is in the latter that we observe the extension of meanings and the transformation of social values and norms associated with masculinity, femininity, motherhood, marriage and patriarchy.

E. Conclusion

In this chapter, I examined the Lebanese women's rights movement from the viewpoint of whether or not organizations pursued autonomous or embedded strategies to achieving their goals. Embeddedness would be a strategy that operates within the dominance of the kinship networks in Lebanon, and would seek elbow room in these networks to transform patriarchal barriers to equality. I identified the three pressing issues— Full citizenship rights, political representation and legal reforms– in the light of the family contexts common to all the Lebanese agents involved. I showed that, outside of the state, the kinship system and the confessions have traditionally restricted women's rights and their inclusion as equal citizens. I showed that despite adhering to the behavioral norms set by their kinship system, activists were able to enact claims-making strategies for women's rights.

A number of activists in the movement on both an individual and institutional level use

what Suad Joseph has term patriarchal connectivity to achieve collective benefits. Their movements straddle the divide between autonomy (they remain independent, are led by dedicated woman's rights activists, seek independent financing, and form coalitions as connective spaces for women) and embeddedness (they avoid religious confrontation, find elbow room within the kinship system and embrace traditional female roles as wife, mother, daughter).

I have offered a nuanced perspective that emphasizes embedded strategies for the internal and external building of women's rights organizations. In this perspective I explained the conditions under which positive kinship resources are beneficial to advancing organizational goals. I showed for instance the relevance of the home as a meeting space that does add a personal dimension to strengthening relationships among activists. And I have shown how organizational structures vary according to the guiding principles of its founders' ideology. More importantly, I dissolved the stereotype that there exists an either/or logic that pits kinship against women's rights – rather, Lebanese activists use both embedded and autonomous frameworks to advance to their goals. I showed that, while these dichotomous dimensions might present a logical opposition, in practice a series of compromises are often enacted: there are those who present themselves as highly autonomous, like the Bahithat, who use embedded means such as their husbands' connections to fund their projects; there are other, like Princess Arslan, who, while highly embedded in her kinship structure, mobilized women to vote and run for office on the basis of seeking autonomy from their traditional leaders, the Arslans. Thus, one cannot tell at first glance what strategy is dominant. Finally, I examined external structuration

processes that included funding and coalitions. I found that embedded activists used embedded funding strategies more than autonomous activists, yet a number of organizations worked collectively under the umbrella of larger national and thematic coalitions.

In mobilizing their constituents to support the women's movement, I have stressed how important it was for activists to use embedded framing alignments in order to transform oppressive patriarchal norms and values by keying them in empowering terms. For instance, activists have worked on changing the paradigm image of father-daughter from one of simple obedience to one in which the thoughtful father supports his daughter's education and her financial independence.

In addressing women's activism, this chapter asserted that the autonomous-embedded approach took into account the cultural capacities of Lebanon; forged an activist identity that was not anchored in a culturally threatening demand for the dissolution of the gender divide, nor to an individualist model of female autonomy; and worked in non-confrontational manners towards the goal of equality for women. Lebanese women focused on the notion of embedded strategies as key to generating and spreading the momentum of their movement beyond their typical sympathizers. By using embedded strategies, women's rights organizations have created shifts in society's gender-defined composition.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this research has been to highlight the dynamics and interactions between activists and their kin groups in Lebanon, where kinship based solidarities are relatively strong. I analyzed two strategic dimensions of women's political activism, autonomy – in which the individual operates without reliance on kin in the public sphere, and embeddedness – in which the activist does use her kinship networks and capital to achieve political ends. I then posed the research question at the heart of this dissertation: how do Lebanese women's right activists, pursuing citizenship rights and political recognition, use their kinship system in their quest?

Charrad's groundbreaking work on the role of kin groups in politics (2001; 2007a) has shifted the focus of analysis of political sociologists who study the Middle East to include the role of extended kin groupings. In her exploration of the role of kin groupings in the struggle for independence from colonial powers, Charrad examines how women's rights in the new nation-states of the Maghreb were curtailed or expanded, depending on the degree of autonomy of the postcolonial state from kin groupings. She shows that the more autonomous the state was from kin groupings, the more leeway it had to expand women's rights. My work, building on her focus on kinship in politics, has, in contrast, turned to the study of women activists' struggle for citizenship rights in Lebanon today – and here, too, my research has found that kinship ties are central resources in political action.

My original motivation, here, was to learn how political activism for women's rights might develop its own methods and goals in Lebanon, and by inference in the Arab World. In Lebanon and in other Arab states, the kinship system, in partnership with the religious apparatus, has traditionally been considered as oppressive of women's rights and their freedoms. However, Lebanese women's rights activists work actively within the kinship structure to advance their interests, instead of passively submitting to it or separating themselves from it. Instead of polemicizing against the family, or using a discourse that sets up an opposition between family life and the public sphere, they emphasize the harmony of women's rights and the family. In practice, this means that they enact claims-making strategies for women's rights while continuing to adhere if possible to the behavioral norms set by their kinship system.

Lebanese women's rights activists interact with their kin groups at three levels. Firstly, at the level of *becoming an activist*, some women obtain direct support and encouragement from their nuclear and extended family while others rise through alternative networks such as membership in a political party or a professional union. Then, synchronically at the *personal strategies level*, some activists utilize their family support and kinship networks to establish their activist identities and facilitate their civic engagement while others use collegial and professional networks. Finally, on the *organizational level*, I found that women's rights organization pursued women's empowerment in the context of their role in the family, dissolving the divide between women's rights in the sphere of legal equality and women's rights within the family.

A. Kinship

The boundaries that distinguish Lebanese family relations are blurry, subjective and complex. In explaining the complexity and the extensiveness of family relations in the Middle East, I constructed five categories of kin relations: nuclear family, natal kin, marital kin, cousins and extended relatives. These degrees of connectivity represent an assemblage of strong and weak ties that aid activists in advancing their movement's goals. Using empirical findings, I moved away from viewing family membership under the three-fold categorical schema of primary, secondary and tertiary or in terms of the nuclear versus extended family dichotomy.

My research has argued that kinship is a relevant determinant of actors' social status at the outset. Kinship networks potentially grant activists access to the public sphere according to their social status, community origin and confession connections, while the assurance of kinship backing creates trust and respect in the public sphere for activists. These complex kinship networks encompass a number of connective ties of different intensities, within which activists bridge social networks and connect with a target in other horizontal or vertical networks. The aggregate of these durable networks could constitute the social capital that sociologists and political scientists see as important to encouraging voluntary engagement, political participation and civil society.

These networks have a more than strategic relevance in women's activism. Membership in a kin group does sometimes afford activists direct access to authorities, depending on the social status of the kin group, although this access is not automatic and does not work

in all times and places for all activists. In these connective settings, social capital is associated with extended kinship status and has both positive and negative impacts, depending on the value of the family reputation. As I have shown women who sought autonomy from the influence of their kin's social status and networks were typically those whose kin groups provided them with negative or insignificant family resources, especially among working class and some middle class women. Activists who remain embedded in kinship groups see no problem in using kinship ties, ranging in intensity from strong to weak, in advancing their movement's goals; and even activists who tend more towards the autonomous dimension recognize the power and usefulness of these ties.

In Lebanon, social status is not determined by educational attainments but by the wealth and the reputation of the kin group. It is established based on the recognition of the family name which endows people at birth with widely varying amounts of social capital. The family name orients agents in social interaction as to where a given person can be assumed to stand in relation to politics and religion in Lebanon, as in other Arab states.

The family's position in society facilitates the individual's economic, political and social affairs. Activists establish their credibility in society through their family name and the position it occupies; they influence it and are influenced by it as many cases in my sample show. Rabab Sadr provides an exemplary instance in framing her activism as a contribution to her family heritage of public service. In Lebanon, family relationships are institutionalized and operationalized into what Charrad (2001; 2007a) has called "kin-

based solidarities" in the history of the Middle East. The prestige of certain large families in Lebanon, a historical residue of the feudal system, continues to generate loyalty from even remote "cousins;" women and men both tend to follow the political alliances of their kin groups. Women activists use the family name as a currency for creating access, credibility and recognition. Although family status can be a constraint on certain women, others benefit from the trust garnered by a historically resonant, community recognized family name.

On the personal level, the family plays an important role in the social organizing of women's rights groups, and effects efforts to raise awareness, to empower and to support the political and economic status of women. In my interviews with activists, most attributed their own heightened consciousness of women's rights issues to some family influence, either active (the expressed views of important family members) or passive (allowing the activist space to become educated, aware and active).

Although the data reveals only very slight variation by class, overall my findings suggest that the majority of activists recognized their closest kin as the individuals who had the most influence on their decisions to engage in civic activities. I have found the results are far from clear cut because although the fathers were as empowering for working class and some middle class women, these women found other family members such as brothers, uncles, husbands, mothers, and other relatives that were supportive and encouraging. Many activists perceived their fathers as role models for their personal traits of perseverance, pursuit of knowledge, tolerance and open-mindedness, as well as their

dedication to public service and social justice. A less public sphere oriented influence was exercised by mothers, who were perceived as role models of sacrifice for the sake of the family. Husbands also took active roles in encouraging activists to gain social consciousness and enabling their activism. This cultural aspect was significant to politicians and activists not simply on a personal level, but on a social one too. When an activist was publicly supported by her husband, she thereby gained social legitimacy for her words and actions.

B. Embedded Activism

Activists use autonomous and embedded strategies to modify and partially dismantle the gender-specific divide between the public and private spheres. They expanded on the capabilities provided for them within their family and culture to enhance women's status in their public as well as private roles. Those with positive kinship capital utilized their access to connective networks and their endowment of trust in public for advancing women's rights; those who lacked the family connections, found alternatives in professional networks and collegial coalitions. They pursued strategies that were intentionally non-confrontational on issues relating to the family. In terms of becoming activists and organizing women's rights activism on a personal level, they sought elbow room in the family to create equal rights for women. Regardless of their stance on the significance of their family to their activism, activists treated kinship as a resource which they mobilized.

Women's rights activists built their personal capacities and engaged in public activism by mobilizing their close family resources. They were better able to manage their absence from their homes when supported by an accommodating family network. With varying degrees of success, Lebanese activists were able to manage space during their absence with alternative care arrangements. When these women were away from home, they were still present by proxy, planning the care of their children and their families. Activists' relied on the help of their mothers, sisters, aunts, mothers-in-law, husbands and older children as well as domestic servants (in the case of those who could afford them).

These personal strategies challenge the stereotype of an either/or logic that pits kinship against women's rights. Rather, Lebanese activists use both embedded and autonomous frameworks to advance to their goals. This research showed that, while the autonomous-embedded dichotomy presents a logical opposition, in practice it is negotiated. Activists in the movement use kinship connectivity on both an individual and institutional level to achieve collective benefits. On the collective level, women's rights organizations mobilize resources, frame their demands and recruit participants within the boundaries set by kinship norms. To embed their movement's framework in norms sanctioned by kin groups, they reshaped oppressive norms and values in terms of empowerment.

C. Contribution to Theory

The Social movement literature has often perceived the family as irrelevant to actors' empowerment whereas the feminist movement literature has often seen it only as hindering. My analysis tried to open a debate regarding feminist and social movements

on whether the family can be empowering to women's activism. Although further research is needed to reinforce such discussion, my study indirectly showed that the family impact is much more complex than it is portrayed in feminist theory.

This research offers a new reading of civil society and social movements. It advances understanding of how activists obtain social capital from unusual sources and benefit from social and kinship networks in various contexts. I have made a case against the assumption that the logic of social movements requires, as a condition, actors' autonomy from traditional social structure, or that any and all progressive social movements should necessarily strive for that goal. I have thus laid the groundwork for a broader sense of social movements and, in particular, shown how it is theoretically possible for social movement actors to be embodied within a familialist framework.

While social movement studies have addressed the paradigm of recruiting new members, they have neglected to look at how recruits join a movement and the basic tasks that these individuals need to accomplish in order to participate in political activism. My discussion of embeddedness versus autonomy as ideal dimensions that, in practice, are reconfigured in terms of various compromises (degrees of autonomy or embeddedness) gives us a framework for better understanding the relationship between kinship structure and the sort of political activism traditionally associated with autonomy-favoring political and cultural systems.

My research on social movements in a non-Western context challenges presuppositions that exclude kinship structures as a space for progressive social movement or labels them as obstacles to be overcome, and find kinship networks to be either irrelevant or nugatory to the development of civil society. In the West, opposition to patriarchal structures was backgrounded by the assurance of a state that supported civil rights and maintained some minimum of social insurance. In societies where these features are not present, the politics of family and agents' positions within kinship ties necessarily follow a different course.

D. Looking Ahead

The framework developed in this study to analyze how activists use kinship to advance their movement has called attention to several future considerations in regards to research, women's studies, Middle Eastern studies and social movement theory.

This study has unveiled new methodological possibilities by incorporating kinship in research methods. In terms of conducting research, I introduced kinship networks and capital as tools for gaining access to respondents and earning the trust of the target population. I personally used kinship networks and capital (such as family name and connections) to gain access to respondents and establish trust with them. Using family networks for research purposes is an area that ought to be explored further.

By studying non-Western women's movements, this research contributes to knowledge of these movements and offers a new approach to viewing women's activism. The focus on

women's organizing in a non-Western setting and in a Muslim culture will impact the views of Western scholars who typically do not consider these topics in their research. This study stands to add to a body of literature that is moving beyond more conventional views of the locus of women's activism. It offers a look at alternative and unconventional contexts for women's empowerment. A more complete account of feminism within the context of extended family in Lebanon might help explain why women, even in the most developed societies, are most likely to count on their family support in their pursuit of power and rights.

The recent upsurge of interest in Islam and the Middle East has shown the need to challenge stereotypical assumptions about kinship, marginalized women's agency, and Arab and Muslim women's activism. Lebanon serves as a prototype of Middle Eastern societies and of countries in conflict like Iraq. It is also a living laboratory in which we can see the expansion of women's rights within restrictive confessional, kinship and political contexts.

In broad terms, this study alerts social movement theorists to the fact that kin groups ought to be considered as an important analytic unit for studying social movements. It opens space for further research on considering the family as a positive resource for social movement activists. At the most general level, this research suggests expanding the analysis of family in western and non-western contexts to examine women's empowerment within the family structure.

APPENDIX A: WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS

1. Women's Democratic Gathering

Founded in 1976, this organization's main objective is to encourage women's participation in the economic, social and political fields. The Gathering has three main projects: Combating violence against women, promoting knowledge of women's human rights, and adult literacy. I interviewed the director of the gathering and two program officers. I also collected their speeches since 1994 and information on the organization's structure and programs.

2. Lebanese Women Network

This network of thirteen organizations was founded in 2001 under the leadership of the Women's Democratic Gathering with the assistance of the National Democratic Institute. Its aims are to promote "complete equality" between men and women by eliminating all forms of discrimination and establishing a cooperative and empowering environment. I was invited as an expert observer to a full day evaluation session of the network and its recent campaign against honor crimes. I have several documents on the vision and mission of the network and its constitution.

3. League of Working Women

This organization was founded in 1994 with the aim to improve women's rights in the field of work and syndicates unions. The League also supports women in gaining cases concerning social benefits, and personal status cases. I interviewed the director and acquired several documents and publications.

4. Lebanese Association of Women Researchers (Bahithat)

http://www.assr.org/bahithat/arabic/index.html

This is an independent organization that aims to support and publish the research of its members from Arab and non-Arab states. It was founded in 1991 as an exchange forum for specialists in the social sciences, economists, education, and arts as well as health, development and women's studies. I attended a public lecture on the Druze faith and I interviewed five of its members.

5. The National Committee for the Follow Up of Women's Issues

http://www.cfuwi.org/

The National Committee was established in 1996 following the Beijing conference. It coordinates a network of various non-governmental organizations dealing with women's affairs. It aims to promote women's participation in social, political and economic fields and to abolish discrimination against women. I met with the vice president of the committee and took notes on her contributions to the field of women's rights in Lebanon and I recorded her speech at the Lebanese Women Network' evaluation session. I attended the committee's Annual Gala and have collected several of its reports. I interviewed one of its members but did not have time to interview the president. I obtained additional documents after I returned from Lebanon.

6. League of Lebanese Women's Rights

It was founded in 1943, and aims at defending women's rights in all Lebanon including

the rural areas. In March 1999, it created the "national meeting to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women". This meeting seeks to implement the principles stated in the Lebanese Constitution and in the CEDAW convention and to reform the Lebanese personal status laws. I interviewed the director of the organization as well as its public relations officer. I obtained several documents and publications from the League.

7. Helem http://www.helem.net/

Helem is a nongovernmental non-profit organization registered in Canada in 2004. It is an alliance of groups in Lebanon, Canada, Australia, France and the United States. Helem leads a peaceful struggle for the liberation of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) community in Lebanon from all sorts of legal, social and cultural discrimination. I interviewed its lesbian officer in Lebanon.

8. CRTD-A http://www.crtda.org.lb/

The Collective for Research and Training on Development-Action (CRTD.*A*) is a nongovernmental organization initiated in July 1999 and based in Beirut. It works in Lebanon and across the Arab World primarily in Yemen, Egypt, Syria, Morocco, Tunisia, and Algeria. CRTD.*A* seeks to contribute to the social development of local communities and organizations through enhancing capacities particularly in gender analysis, gender and development, poverty and exclusion, for the purpose of contributing to creating a more just and equitable environment. I interviewed its director and collected documents on its campaigns.

9. Lebanese Council to Resist Violence Against Women

http://www.lebanesewomen.org/

In 1997, as a response to the alarming rate of violent acts against women, LCRVAW was founded in order to carry the concept of violence from private to public awareness. They lobby politicians to change adversary laws; provide legal counseling and advocacy for women in courts; offer counseling through a hotline for victims; and carry out public campaigns on domestic violence. I interviewed three of its officers and attended an event they sponsored: "the Vagina Monologue" – a Lebanese production. I also obtained many of their documents including comparative studies on family codes in several Arab states.

10. Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World

http://www.lau.edu.lb/centers-institutes/iwsaw/index.html

The Lebanese American University founded the Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World (IWSAW) in 1973. The history of the Institute is closely linked to that of the first women's college in the Middle East, the America Junior College for Women, which was established in 1924 by the Presbyterian Mission. The College, which educated Middle Eastern women for half a century, became coed in 1973. I interviewed two officers at the institute and obtained past issues of its journal, *al-Raeda.*

11. National Commission for Lebanese Women http://www.nclw.org.lb/

The NCLW was first created to prepare for the Beijing Conference in 1995 as the official Lebanese representatives to the UN Conference. It was composed of members from both the governmental and non-governmental sectors. After the conference, NCLW became in

1996 the official body responsible to follow up on the implementation of resolutions taken in Beijing. As of 2003, the First Lady heads the Commission and collaborates with a team of appointed women specialists. I interviewed two of its members and obtained its two most recent reports (2004 and 2005).

12. Lebanese Women Council http://www.lcw-cfl.org/

The Lebanese women's council is an umbrella organization founded in 1952. It includes more than 140 Lebanese NGOs dedicated to women's rights and human rights in general. It has many projects aimed at implementing the UN's instruments in Lebanon and especially the CEDAW convention in order to lift the reservations made by the Lebanese government. The council also works for women's rights in the field of politics, work, environment, education, health, family violence, legislation in order to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women. I interviewed a formal president of the council and took notes of the speech that its current president gave during a talk at Notre Dame University. I also attended the council's press conference on its citizenship campaign and obtained its study on the matter. After the conference, I was invited to stay through the council's general assembly meeting.

13. Kafa http://www.kafa.org.lb

Kafa is a nonprofit, nonpolitical and non-confessional civil society organization that seeks to mitigate the causes and results of violence and exploitation of women and children through advocacy and lobbying, raising awareness, and by offering social and legal services to vulnerable cases. It hosts the Women's Court or the Permanent Arab

Court to Resist Violence Against women. The court is a symbolic popular court that aims at fighting all kinds of violence against women in the Arab societies. I witnessed a public campaign of Kafa in downtown Beirut and I obtained their information. Unfortunately, I was prevented from interviewing the director by the outbreak of the war.

14. Joseph and Laure Moghaizel Foundation

http://www.kleudge.com/moghaizelfoundation/

The Moghaizel Foundation is a Lebanese NGO founded in 1996 in order to enhance and disseminate the thoughts and discipline of attorneys Joseph and Laure Moghaizel who where well known for their devotion to the cause of human rights in Lebanon and in the Arab World. Laure Moghaizel struggled for half a century to reform several legislations concerning women's rights even during the civil war. I interviewed Laure's son and two of her most loyal followers. I was prevented from interviewing her daughter due to the war.

15. Women's Political Empowerment Committee (1 person)

Under the leadership of Princess Hayat Arslan, the Women Political Empowerment Committee was created in 2004 to promote women's role in national decision-making and to boost women's active participation in political life. I interviewed Princess Arslan in 2005 and again in 2006.

16. The Movement for People's Rights

I interviewed Dr. Ugarit Younan who is a prominent Lebanese peace activist and the co-

founder, with her life partner Walid Slaibi, of the NGO Movement for People's Rights. They founded Movement in 1988, near the conclusion of Lebanon's civil war in the nonviolent struggle against sectarianism. Dr. Younan is active in advocating for women's rights. She wrote a series of women empowerment booklets for the Institute of Women's Studies in the Arab World literacy program.

17. National Democratic Institute

http://www.ndi.org/worldwide/mena/lebanon/lebanon.asp

The National Democratic Institute's Lebanon office was established in 2000. It has worked on coalition building for Lebanese civic activists and has provided technical assistance in monitoring elections. NDI has facilitated the formation of the Lebanese Women Network and has assisted with workshops to facilitate planning, strategy, conflict prevention and to create an organizational structure. I interviewed the women empowerment project manager.

18. United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) – Centre for Women http://www.escwa.org.lb

The Centre for Women was established in 2003 to empower women economically, socially and politically. Towards this end, the activities of the Centre focus on sensitizing society to gender-related issues through various means including meetings and research publications, media campaigns, TV spots and documentary films; promoting partnership in the family; assisting national machineries for women and NGOs in institutional and capacity building and gender mainstreaming. I met with an officer at the Centre and

obtained ESCWA’s reports on women in MENA.

19. Imam Sadr Foundation http://www.sadr-foundation.org.lb/

The foundation established in 1962 to promote equal opportunities for people to contribute creatively to the social justice in their communities. Some of its main objectives are increasing women's participation in the development process; improving their access to education, health and work. Imam as-Sadr was distinguished among all of his contemporary spiritual and political leaders for his openness especially towards Christians. He played an all-important role in the Lebanese political life. I traveled to Tyre to interview the sister of Imam as-Sadr who is the president of the foundation (Tyre is now completely bombed).

APPENDIX B: WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND FAMILY LAW

Since its independence, Lebanon has been legally committed to advancing women's civil, economic and political rights. Legal decrees such as the Constitution issued by the state are fairly gender-neutral in their terminology, treating all Lebanese citizens equally. The extension of women's rights in the public sphere necessarily entails interaction and negotiation with three pillars of Lebanese society: The State, the Church and the Kinship system. Whereas women's rights in the private sphere are strictly determined by relationships within the family and its self-appointed ally, the Church.

In general, when matters affect women's relationship with the state only, laws are fair and neutral. When matters involve either the church or the family, then supremacy is given to either of these social structures over women's rights. Moreover, when matters involve religion and the family, then the states stays neutral, unable to protect the woman from either of these structures. Sometimes Church clergy intervene on behalf of the woman, but most of the time, the church and patriarchal families feed into each other and legitimize each other, leaving the woman at a disadvantage. The renowned Lebanese lawyer and women's rights activist, Laure Moghaizel (1995), classified women's rights according to five areas of the law: Political rights, legal competency, economic and social rights, punitive laws, and the Personal Status law.

Political Rights and Legal Competency (حقوق سياسية وأحكام متعلقة بالأهلية - Huquq Siyasiyeh wa Ahkam mutaaliqa bil Ahliye). These are the Constitutional rights of women that include

citizenship, election, nomination and assuming political positions. The Constitution grants every Lebanese citizen over the age of 21 the right to vote in national and municipal election. Likewise, the law grants women and men the right to be elected to a public office and serve as parliamentary members (نائب - Nayeb), governors (محافظ - Muhafeth) or mayors (مختار - Mukhtar). Furthermore, no language exists in the Lebanese Constitution that excludes women from assuming public position include diplomatic and military posts.

Although citizenship is a political right, women and men are subject to different rules in attaining citizenship. Foreign women married to Lebanese men are eligible for Lebanese citizenship after one year of being lawfully married, but the same is not the case for a foreign man who marries a Lebanese woman. A Lebanese woman who marries a foreign national does have the option to keep her citizenship status. Conflicting resolutions have been passed over the years regarding the foreign husband's eligibility to obtain Lebanese citizenship for marrying a Lebanese woman. Lebanese citizenship is granted on the bases of *Jus Sanguine* to children of a Lebanese father; and on the base of *Jus Soli*, to children under the age of 18 who were born on Lebanese soil with no determined filiations to a father. In either case, women do not have the right to pass their citizenship status onto their husbands and certainly not to their children.

The Lebanese law has considered men and women equally competent in their civil rights and responsibilities and has treated them with equality in regards to ownership of property and its management. Thanks to the long struggle waged by Laure Moghaizel,

women now have the right to be a witness in a real estate contract, the right to travel, to obtain life insurance, or to conduct commerce without the permission of her husband.

Economic and social rights (الحقوق الإقتصادية والإجتماعية - Huquq Iqtisadiye wa Ijtimaiye). The Lebanese laws guarantees women the right to equal pay, social security, retirement, maternity leave (paid for at least 45 days and up to three months) while punishing the firing of a pregnant woman as early as her second trimester. The Lebanese law does not discriminate against women in relation to work-related issues like appointments, promotion or assigned duties. Furthermore, "The Lebanese law imposes the principle of equal pay for equal work. In addition, the law states that the minimum wage should apply to both women and men without any discrimination… The end of service indemnity system in Lebanon states that any employee, whether man or woman, should be treated the same way following the same rules and conditions. In addition, a woman has the right to retire and obtain her indemnity earlier in the event of marriage" (UNDP 2002: 1-2). It is noteworthy that several of the social security, retirement and insurance laws were granted to women thanks to the efforts of Ma□tres Laure Moghaizel and Iqbal Dughan.

Punitive laws (أحكام جزائية – Ahkam Jazayieh). The Lebanese Law used to grant total acquittal to men convicted of "honor crime." However, Laure and Joseph Moghaizel were partially successful in persuading the Lebanese legislators to change the law. Currently, men who commit honor crime are subject to reduced sentencing given that "the person unexpectedly found his wife, sister, or a member of his lineage or offspring in witnessed or illegal adulterous crime and killed either of the adulterous without pre-

meditation" (Article 562). The Law discriminates against women in cases of adultery. Men are only tried for adultery if they take on a mistress publically or commit adultery in their married home. Women are subject to more severe punishments regardless of the location of their act or the type of their relationship. Abortion is illegal and penalized by prison and monetary fines unless to save the woman's life or her honor and the same applies to the person administering the abortion. Prostitution is recognized by the health code as a profession driven by necessity by women who surrender to men in exchange for money. Brothels are licensed only to women over the age of 25, and prohibit the practice of homosexuality. Interestingly, the law addresses crimes such as rape, kidnapping or harassment but takes no notice of domestic violence, including sexual violence between married couples.

The Personal Status Law (قانون الأحوال الشخصية – qanun al ahwal al shakhsiyeh) regulates marriage, divorce, filiations, adoption and guardianship. It has transformed from *Dhimma* to *Millet* to Confessional system corresponding with three historical rulings of Islamic conquests, Ottoman Empire and the French Mandate. While minorities under the Muslim conquests and their (الذمة) *Dhimma* system enjoyed a great level of flexibility, their rights and entitlements were changing constantly depending on the ruling power and the mood of its ruler. Furthermore, this system characterized social structures as a Sunni majority versus diverse Christian and Jewish minorities (*ahl al Dhimma*), in addition to the Shiite.

The *Millet* system was allegedly an improvement over the *Dhimma* system in Lebanon because it allowed the Christians and the Jews and all the non-Sunni communities, a

certain autonomous status as far as the personal status laws. Large Christian communities developed their own personal status law and received direct approval by the Ottoman Sultan. However, the execution of the law remained in the hands of the Ottoman government. The *Millet* system gave Christians more autonomy and freedom even in non-religious and non-personal matters. Patriarchs and Bishops provided travel documents, good behavior affidavit to conduct business, etc.

The French, when establishing the Mandate over Lebanon, decided to preserve the *Millet* system under a confessional system that attempted to balance secularism and confessionalism together. In 1936, the French was officially declared the equal status of 17 ethnosectarian groups under the infamous law known as LR 60. This law recognized eleven Christian sects including: Maronites, Antioch Orthodox, Greek Catholics, Armenian Gregorian Orthodox, Armenian Catholics, Syrian Orthodox, Syrian Catholics, Assyrian Chaldeans, Nestorian, Roman Catholics, and Protestants; five Muslim sects: Sunnis, Shiite Alawites, Shiite Jaafari, Ismaelites, and Druze; and Jews (with its three synagogues in Aleppo, Damascus and Beirut). Only recently, in 1996, did the Coptic Orthodox denomination replace the disappearing Jewish Lebanese community. Each one of these denominations established its own Confessional Court with its own specific laws to exercise their exclusive jurisdiction over the following matters:

1. Engagement and dowry
2. Marriage (lawfulness, rights and obligations, annulment, separation, dissolution)
3. Requirements for Legal and Illegal Filiations and Adoption
4. Parental Authority over and Guardianship of children and other minors

5. Managing divorce, separation, annulment as well as associated alimony
6. Imposing and estimating child support

Engagement for all Muslim takes place among family who read the *fatiha* as a blessing without necessarily involving religious authorities. The only Christian sect that regulates engagements is the Orthodox Church, which mandates that a priest or a Monsignor to officiate the engagement and guide the couple in exchanging vows and require that the man offers a gift to the woman.

Both Muslim and Christian courts set rules on meeting all the required conditions for marriage including marrying couples of different sexes, who are mature and have obtained the family's consent. While for most Christian sects, the bride and the groom are required to give consent in one place in front of witnesses, Muslim women can communicate her consent through her tutor in front of witnesses, and the tutor signs the contract with the groom in front of witnesses. Family consent on the marriage contract is highly encouraged especially among minors.

Sects disagree in their assessment of what constitutes the age of consent for married e couples. For instance, the Orthodox Church has decreed that both men and women should not marry until they have reached the age of 18. For Sunnis, the age for marriage for men is 18, and for women, 17. The Shiites allow women to marry as early as 9 and men as early as 15. Of course these decisions are determined by a religious judge or a parish leader rather than by the state.

Table 8: Marriage Laws by Sects

SECT	MARRIAGE AGE: BOYS	MARRIAGE AGE: GIRLS	AUTHORITY
Sunnis	18	17	Judge
Shiites	15	9	Judge
Druze	18	17	Judge
Catholics	16	14	Parish Leader
Orthodox	18	18	Parish Leader
Jews	18	12.5	Bride's Father
Protestants	18	16	Spiritual Court

In regards to divorce among the Christian sects, it is absolutely prohibited except for adultery, separation, or conversion out of the religion, as well as extreme cases such as attempted murder, insanity, imprisonment for over 3 years, neglect for 3 years, or becoming a monk (for Orthodox). Protestants are the only confession that grants separation in proven cases of domestic abuse. For Muslims, divorce *(طلاق Talaq)* is the right of the husband (except for the Druze, who require an order from a religious judge). Divorce can also be granted in case of *Khalee* (خلع) upon the wife's request; *Eilae* (إيلاء) if the husband swears to God not to approach the woman; *Leaan* (لعان) which is adultery of the wife; *Tafreeq* (تفريق) when a judge upon wife's request for a fault in the husband separate the couple (although this does not apply to Shiites). The Druze give permission to both the husband and wife to separate if either of them committed adultery. Finally, *Fasekh* (فسخ) is based on a court decision to annul marriage for an emergency reason (like conversion) and without the consent of the couples.

All denominations give the Father the right of guardianship over his children's financial and sentimental affairs. And all denominations (except Catholics) consider the paternal grandfather as the legal guardian over the children financially and sentimentally in case of the father's death or incapacity. After the paternal family has been exhausted, the next in line for guardianship among Muslims is a relative of the father; among Orthodox is determined by the religious court; Catholics assign guardianship by way of the priest or a court, while Protestants give it to the mother **and/ or** the family of the father, and after that the family of the mother. In case of divorce, the mother is given custody of her children until they reach a certain age. This age is highly subjective and determined by the religious court. Again, here we find that the most generous with divorced women is the Orthodox Church. Both boys and girls get to stay with their mother until they reach the age of 15. It is noteworthy that this measure is recent and came about through the offices of the parish without any advocacy from women. Previously the Orthodox Church gave divorced mothers the custody of their boy until they reached the age of 7 and girls until they were 9, which is similar to how the Sunnis treated custody. The Protestants revised their custody ages also recently and the number 12 was picked randomly. It is noteworthy that both Catholics and Shiite mothers can lose custody of their boys as soon as they stop nursing them and even before in some cases.

Table 9: Custody Laws by Sects

CUSTODY (Transfer from wife to husband)	**AGE: BOYS**	**AGE: GIRLS**
Sunnis	7	9

Shiites (if the mother does not remarry)	2	7
Orthodox	15 (7)	15 (9)
Catholics (Determined on a case by case by the church)	Not Known	Not Known
Protestants (Revised law)	12 (7)	12 (7)

Protection from harm by limitation of rights is enforced when the woman decides to leave her husband; the husband then has the right to bring her back to his house in compliance (بيت الطاعة – Beit al Ta'a). The only obligation that a woman has to her husband is to live with him and to be obedient to him, in order not to risk being considered by the court as dissonant (ناشز). The code, in which the image of the wife is treated almost as a more of a privileged house maid than a partner, is sanctioned by religious authorities, who claim to be operating in order to protect the wife. A Protestant Pastor once indicated that these laws were put in this form in order to protect the women because by putting the man in charge of the household, he is then held accountable. And in general, women in Lebanon are not earning enough money to support their families. Therefore, if the law makes them responsible for the household then the husbands cannot claim their money once they are separated.

APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

This is a general protocol that include all possible questions, however, only selected questions would be asked during an interview depending on the nature of the organization

O. Organizational Goals and Agendas:

1. Can you please tell me how and when your organization was founded?
2. What is the size of your organization? And how do you recruit members?
3. How long has the leader (you) being involved in this organization?
4. Can you tell who makes the decision in your organization? Who are the officers? How are they elected?
5. How are members of the board selected? and what do they do?
6. How would this organization do if you (Leader) decide(s) that you (s/he) are (is) unable to continue in this struggle?
7. What are some of most important issues that your organization advocates?
8. What are the major political issues in which your organization is involved?
9. Which goals do you set for your organizations? Which ones have you achieved?
10. Which one were you unable to achieve? Why?
11. How have your goals changed over the years? Specifically before the war and after? How about during the war?
12. What services does your organization offer to constituents? (direct help, counseling or support)
13. Who are the audience for your organization's work?
14. Who have been your most and least supportive allies? (Probe) general types of allies; grants from local, national and international organizations?
15. Do you believe that you have succeeded in presenting your organization and struggle as a political actor?
16. Do you feel that your work contributes to the transition to democracy?

V. Membership in voluntary association

1. In how many organizations/associations/groups are you involved?
2. How much time do you devote to your participation in these organizations per week?
3. What other associations have you been involved in, prior to your involvement with this organization?
4. Have you held a paying job in your field of activism?

K. Kinship:

1. Can you tell me about a family member who has been your role model?
2. Do you feel that a Lebanese woman can be politically active without the support of her family?
3. Has family facilitate/hinder women's activism in general? In your experience?

4. Does the woman's role as activist conflict with her responsibilities as a mother and a wife?
5. Has anyone in your family offered any assistance to you in your political activities?
6. Has anyone in your family introduced you to someone in power?
7. Has anyone in your family been involved in politics?
8. Did their position facilitate your access to other decision makers?
9. Do you feel that Lebanese decision-makers need to know more about your family background before they can engage in dialogue with you?
10. Some argue that kinship is very important in Lebanon. What does it mean to you?
11. Do you think that women's rights activists are better off if they engage their family connections?
12. What types of household do you think activists come from in general?
13. Does a family name guarantee access to a politician?

N. Networks Overlap:

1. How close are you to women who are involved in this organization and other organizations?
2. Do you visit each other on a social basis?
3. Do you visit with your associates and their families?
4. Do you think this type of socializing is important to your relationships and struggles?
5. Do you feel like you build a quasi-family in your activism?

R. Religion:

1. In your opinion, how does religion impact women's rights in Lebanon?
2. What is its impact on women's engagement in political activities?
3. How has your religion affected your participation?
4. How often do you participate in religious activities?
5. What is your religious affiliation?

S. Personal Questions:

1. In your opinion, how important are physical looks for Lebanese women?
2. In your opinion, how important are intellectual attainments for Lebanese women?
3. Did you parents share your opinion? How about your children?
4. Where were you born and raised?
5. What did your father do for a living?
6. What was your father's highest educational level?
7. What did your mother do for a living?
8. What was your mother's highest educational level?
9. How many brothers and sisters did you have growing up?
   How many of them still live in Lebanon today?
10. Are you married?
11. Do you have children? Are they in Lebanon or elsewhere? Where?
12. What does your husband think of what you do?
13. What is your husband's highest educational level?
14. What does your husband do for a living?

15. What is the highest educational level you have attained?
16. From which institution did you graduate?
17. What was your major area of study?
18. Why did you choose that area?
19. What do you do for a living?
20. If you work, then who helps you around the house?
21. Do you use the help of domestic servants?
22. What foreign languages do you speak?
23. Have you traveled outside the Lebanon?
24. If yes, where have you gone?
25. What is the longest period of time you spent outside Lebanon at one time? Or last time?
26. Do you watch the news?
27. Do you read the newspaper regularly? If so which one(s)?
28. Do you read newspapers/journals in languages other than Arabic? If so which ones?

C. Conclusion:

1. How do you see the future of women's political participation in Lebanon?

APPENDIX D: CONSENT FORM

The Family and The Making of Women's Rights Activism in Lebanon

Rita Stephan
University of Texas, Austin

You are invited to participate in a study of the activism for women's rights in Lebanon. My name is Rita Stephan and I am a Ph. D. candidate in sociology at the University of Texas at Austin in the United States. The purpose of this study is to research how women negotiate and advocate for the advancement of the Lebanese women's legal rights and political representation.

If you decide to participate, I will conduct an interview with you. The interview will take approximately two hours. During the study, you will be asked about your experiences, attitudes and impressions of the subject. Please remember that your participation is entirely voluntary.

With your permission, the interview will be audio taped and the tape will be transcribed. Please note that your name and other identifying information will **not** be included on the transcript unless you grant me permission to do so. At the end of the research project, the audiotapes will be destroyed. There are no foreseeable inconveniences, risks, or costs involved to participating in this study.

If you have any questions about the study, please ask me. If you have any questions later you may call my supervisor Professor Mounira Charrad at 01-512-471-1122. Your participation is completely voluntary. You may stop participating in this research at any time or you may as well choose not to answer any questions.

You are making a decision whether or not to participate. If you later decide that you do not want to participate in the study, please inform me. You may discontinue your participation in the study at any time.

Participant's Name Date
(To be entered by the Research and is used for the researcher's records only)

Researcher's Signature (Rita Stephan) Date

Release Name: _____YES _____NO

APPENDIX E: DRAMATIS PERSONA

- Lina Abou Habib, Director of the Collective for Research, Training, Development and Action CRTD-A (Urban Christian married to a Syrian Omar).
- Lina Alameddine, the National Democratic Institute. MA in Education, Ph.D. Candidate in public education (Druze).
- Princess Hayat Wahhab Arslan, President of Women's Political Empowerment Committee and Lebanon the Giver (Druze from Mountains).
- Azza Charara Beydoun, Professor of Psychology at the Lebanese University, co-founder of Bahithat, and member of the National Commission for Lebanese Women (Shiite from the South of Lebanon)
- Wadad Chakhtoura, Director of the Lebanese Women Democratic Gathering and founder of the Lebanese Women Network, retired teacher and activist in the Communist Party and the Teachers' Syndicate (Catholic middle class urban).
- Rana Chamseddine, Lawyer, volunteers with Lebanese Council to Resist Violence against Women (single Shiite from the south of Lebanon).
- Fehmieh Charafeddine, Professor at the Lebanese University, vice President of the National Committee for the Follow Up of Women's Issues (Urban, Shiite, and divorcée).
- Amal Dibo, Instructor of English at American University of Beirut. Former associate of Laure Moghaizel (single Orthodox from Beirut).
- Iqbal Dughan, Attorney. Former President of the Lebanese Women Council, founder of the Lebanese Working Women League and a founding member of the Lebanese Family Rights Network, host of a women's right television show on al-Arabiya television (Sunni from Tripoli and a widow of an activist).
- Rima Fakhry, Current member of the Hezbollah Political Committee (executive committee), former director of Women's Section in Hezbollah, BS in agricultural engineering from American University of Beirut (Shiite, middle class, and lives in al-Dahhiya).
- Mona Fayad, Professor of Psychology at the Lebanese University and member of a political party (Shiite divorcée from south Lebanon).
- Marguerite Helou, Ph.D. from Syracuse University in International Relations, and a professor at Lebanese University, active with the Lebanese Center for Policy Studies (Catholic from Dahhiya).
- Fadia Hoteit, Professor at Lebanese University and member of Bahithat (Shiite from al-Dahhiya).
- Nora Jumblat, spouse of Walid Jumblat Druze leader. BA in Arts History from Switzerland (Sunni elite from Syria).
- Nada Majed, coordinator of the adult literacy project of the Lebanese Women Democratic Gathering (Shiite working class from Dahhiya).

- Jean Said Makdisi, MA English, former educator at Lebanese American University and member of Bahithat (Christian, Palestinian married to Lebanese, sister of Edward Said).
- Linda Mattar, leader of the League of Lebanese Women and former President of the Lebanese Women Council, ran an unsuccessful campaign in the 1996 election for the Parliament, and recognized by a French magazine as one of 100 most influential women in the world (Catholic urban middle class).
- Nayla Moawad, Parliamentary Member and former Minister of Social Affairs, widow of late Lebanese President, René Moawad (Maronite elite from North Lebanon).
- Laure Moghaizel, (deceased) Lawyer and founding member of Lebanese Council of Women, Lebanese Human Rights Association, Democratic Party, the nonviolent movement, the National Commission for Lebanese Women along with numerous other human rights and women's rights organizations, wife of late Joseph Moghaizel (Maronite urban).
- Rasha Momeh, MA in Anthropology, former staff at CRTD-A and active in Helem (Sunni, Urban).
- Anita Nassar, MA in education. Assistant director of the Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World (Orthodox, urban).
- Aida Nassrallah, a high school teacher of Arabic literature and a member of the Leagues of the Lebanese Women (Druze from mountain).
- Rabab Sadr, director of Imam Mousa Sadr foundations and sister of the Imam (Shiite Urban).
- Afifa Al-Said, BA in Sociology. Director of the Hariri's Beirut Foundation for Aid and Development, former associate of Laure Moghaizel (Upper-middle class from Beirut).
- Lora Sfeir, Director of Lebanese Council to Resist Violence against Women and a government employee with the Economic Ministry (Maronite married a Sunni from Tripoli).
- Aman Shaarani, President of the National Committee for the Follow Up of Women's Issues, member of the National Commission for Lebanese Women, previous president of the Lebanese Women Council, previous candidate for Parliament, professor at the Lebanese University (Urban Sunni from Tripoli).
- Lamiah Rustum Shehadeh, Ph.D. from Harvard. Former founder of National Commission for Lebanese Women and retired professor of Women's Studies at the American University of Beirut (Orthodox urban from Beirut).
- Rafif Sidawi, Ph.D. former director of Lebanese Council to Resist Violence against Women.
- Caroline Slaibi, MA. and Ph.D. Candidate in Sociology, coordinates a project combating domestic violence at the Lebanese Women Democratic Gathering married to activist Ghassan Slaibi (Maronite from the mountains in North Lebanon).
- Nuhad Suaid, Former parliamentary member and widow of a physician and a parliamentary member (Maronite elite from Mountains).

- Ugarit Younan, Ph.D. founder of the Movement for people's rights, and partner with activist Walid Slaibi (Urban, middle class).
- Mary Rose Zalzal, Lawyer and activist for women's rights, member of Bahithat. (Maronite from Broumana Mountains).

A NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION

As widely practiced, I adopt in this dissertation, a modified form of the transliteration guidelines used in the *International Journal of Middle East Studies* (IJMES). I have modified the guidelines in two ways. First, while diacritical marks (macrons and dots) are used in *IJMES* only on italicized technical terms, in this dissertation I omit the use of macrons and dots for the sake of simplicity. I also do not add macrons and dots to personal names, place names, names of political parties, or titles of books, but this is done in accordance to *IJMES* guidelines. Second, I do not distinguish between long vowels (ā, ū, ī) and short vowels (a, u, i) as recommended by the *Encyclopedia of Islam* but is used in IJMES sporadically.

IJMES uses the modified *Encyclopedia of Islam* system: *qaf*=q not k; *jim*=j not dj; roman double-letter equivalents are not underlined; the *l* of *al-* is not assimilated to the following consonant; *ta marbuta* is rendered *a* not *ah*; the adjectival *-ya* followed by *ta marbuta* is rendered *-iyya*; *nisba* is rendered *-iyya*. In particular, "ع"Ayn and "ء"hamza are shown as apostrophes, although I relied on the implied meaning to distinguish them from one another and from apostrophes.

Place names with accepted English spellings and personal names of prominent political leaders or cultural figures are also spelled in accordance with English norms. Words that appear in an unabridged English dictionary are not treated as technical terms requiring transliteration or requiring that ayn and hamza be marked (thus excluding terms such as ulema, shaykh, qadi, Sunni,mihrab, minbar, madrasa, suq, etc.). Finally, except at the beginning of an English sentence or endnote, only proper names are capitalized.

The letters are transliterated according to the following guide:

EI 3 - EWIC – EQ					
ا	A	ز	Z	ق	Q
ب	B	س	S	ك	K
ت	T	ش	Sh	ل	L
ث	Th	ص	□ (S)	م	M
ج	J	ض	□ (D)	ن	N
ح	□ (H)	ط	□ (T)	ه	H
خ	Kh	ظ	□ (Th)	و	W
د	D	ع	□	ي	Y (Y, I)
ذ	Dh	غ	Gh	ء	□
ر	R	ف	F		

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